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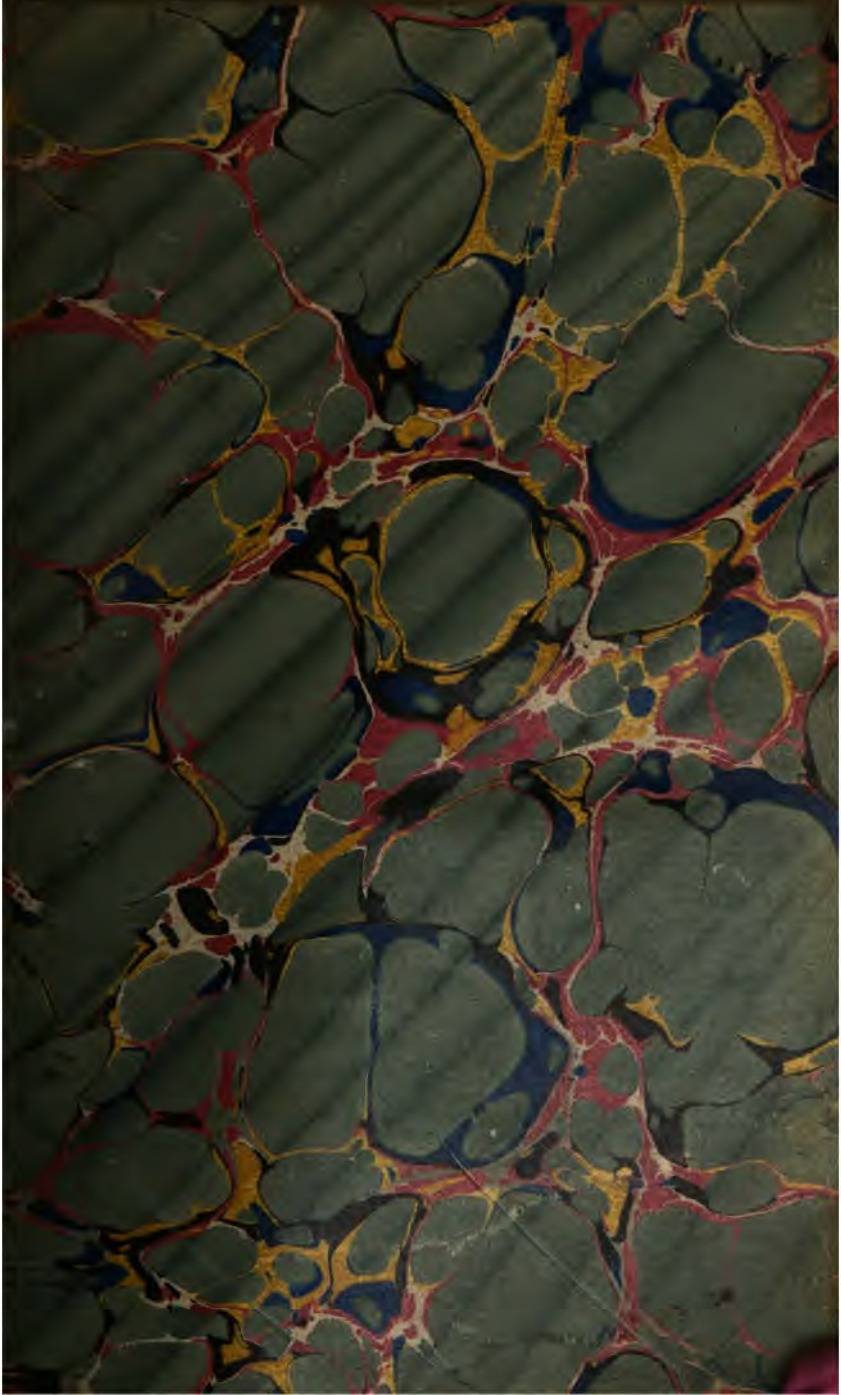

By Catherine Frances Gore

17/6

THE

TUILERIES.

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HUNGARIAN TALES," "ROMANCES OF REAL LIFE,"

&c. &c.

There shalt thou find one heinous article—
Containing the deposing of a king,
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath—
Marked with a blot damned in the book of Heaven

SHAKSPEARE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE TUILERIES.

CHAPTER I.

It is the cause—it is the cause, my soul!
OTHELLO.

THE time-piece on the elegant toilet of the Marchioness de St. Florentin already pointed to the hour of five, on the 22nd of June, 1791,—the morning succeeding the eventful night selected by the unfortunate Louis XVI. for his flight from the Tuileries;—and its graceful owner had just resigned herself to the hands of her adroit attendant, Mademoiselle Flavie, who was hastily removing the diamonds from her neck, and the flowers from her hair, when a low tap at the door of the boudoir suspended her employment.

The Marchioness trembled as she desired her attendant to see who waited without. Well might she tremble,—well might her faltering voice refuse to express the calm quietude of mind she was anxious to assume! On that momentous hour depended the uncertain tissue of her future fate; it might prove her last of happiness; nay, even the very latest of her earthly existence! Her husband—the husband of her free choice, in those days of general disregard to all but interested claims in the marriage vow,—the husband of her faithful affection, at a period, and in a rank of society, where domestic virtues were rare indeed,—was at that very moment sharing the critical fortunes of his sovereign, and braving those imminent perils of popular animosity, in the rash origination of which he was wholly innocent.

The Marquis de St. Florentin, holding no appointment in the royal household, and uninvolved in the odium of a record in the Livre Rouge, could not have been affected, even by a punctilious point of honour, by the dangers of the Court, had not a powerful sentiment of personal affection for the House of Bourbon mo-

tived his determination to hazard a voluntary sacrifice in the cause of his sovereign. He had never, it is true, been distinguished by the favour of Louis, while that favour retained its regal value in the eyes of his subjects; he had received no public distinctions, for he had courted none: the past commemorated no especial claim upon his gratitude; and the future, —alas! for his king and for his country!—the future afforded not the most remote allurement to the schemings of interest or ambition. It was solely, therefore, under the influence of a chivalrous loyalty that St. Florentin resolved to assist in the escape of the royal family; leaving a beloved wife and two helpless children to the mercy of those, who might possibly render them atoning victims to the success of his enterprize; and who would surely wreak upon himself, in case of the failure of his undertaking, the hatred and malice they so venomously cherished against every branch and every adherent of the royal family of France.

"Would it not be more merciful," whispered Madame de St. Florentin to her husband, when he tore himself from her arms on the morning

of the preceding day—"would it not be more generous to let me share your danger?—A dreadful presentiment overpowers my mind!" She faltered, and shudderingly averted her head from the shoulder of the Marquis. "If we part this day, St. Florentin, it will be to meet no more. Danger and wickedness have come among us with imperceptible strides; unsuspicious of the ambuscade, unmindful of their advance, we have been surprised and disarmed. Many, many will be the victims!—the first in rank, the first in loyalty, will pay the earliest forfeiture for their perilous distinction; and if it must be so—if the shadow of fate has already fallen over our heads, let us dare the darkness together. Dearest St. Florentin! take us with you!—your post, your danger shall be ours—do not let us part to-day!"

"Silence, my dear Emiline;—forbearance, my poor trembling girl!—if not for mine, for your own sake, dismiss these horrors from your thoughts. It is unworthy of you to enfeeble my mind on the eve of an important enterprize, by importunate appeals to my tenderness. A peremptory duty summons me from your

side; a duty equally peremptory requires *your* submission to the decree. Look at these innocent creatures!" he continued, leading her towards the bed where her little daughters lay clasped within each other's arms—"look at them, and tell me whether you *dare* desert them."

"*You*, St. Florentin, feel no scruple in quitting them."

"I am a *man;* my duties are of a sterner and more uncompromising nature than your own; they lie in action, in unfailing energy—yours, in patient acquiescence. Be assured, too, that we part but for a brief, brief trial—all our measures are assured, our line of co-operation accurately determined. In less than three days my precious trust will be honourably fulfilled; and, in five, you will rejoin me on the Rhine, with these treasures of our common love. Yes! in five short days, Emiline, we shall meet again, in the midst of security and peace. Heaven knows we have acquired a just estimation of their value!"

"Oh, that our lesson were but happily ended! The severest of my trials is yet to come: we

are about to part for the first time, St. Florentin; or it may be—merciful Providence! that I should say so!—it may be for the last!"

"Is this your fortitude, Emiline,—is this your promised heroism? Remember, I implore you, how much depends on your discretion—how much on your self-support; nor banish one moment from your mind, that the slightest suspicion thrown at this crisis upon our movements, might prove fatal to your sovereign, and to one whom you value—shame that you are to the name of Navelles—far, far beyond;—*your husband*, Emiline, who fondly thanks you for the unheroic partiality. Beware then, dearest, beware!—remember how many malevolent eyes are fixed upon your conduct, and let your resolution——"

"*My resolution!*" exclaimed Madame de St. Florentin, rising from her knees, on which she knelt beside the little couch of her children; "my resolution!—you shall no longer doubt me—no longer deride its energy; see, see what it can effect!" And she flung back her entangled hair from the pale face it overshadowed, and turned wildly towards him, with

the assumed smile and affected submission of a maniac. "Are you satisfied, St. Florentin? am I not sufficiently cheerful—sufficiently self-possessed?"

He turned away, shocked and disconcerted; and implored her to refrain from such terrible demonstrations.

"Still discontented?" she exclaimed, "nay, then, take this last kiss and begone, for my heart is breaking." And she pressed her cold lips to her husband's forehead, and again implored him to leave her to her sorrow.

"One word more, dear Emiline!" said the Marquis earnestly, taking her hand, and laying it with his own upon the heads of his sleeping children: "promise me, that whatever may chance to yourself or me, these children shall still remain your first, your dearest object; that you will cherish those who love them, and cleave to those who can protect their helpless innocence!"

"Is this a necessary appeal—has my conduct——"

"Scorn it not, my beloved! there are other claims which may hereafter weigh heavily

against their welfare; the enthusiastic devotion of wedded love; the unyielding pride of a loyal name; and after these—shrink not, my Emiline, at the word—after these, the *memory of your husband!* But when these, or other powerful interests shall arise to mislead your heart, remember, that to the mother of two helpless girls, self-preservation is a duty of primal moment. Remember this when the prejudices of your youth inflame your resistance to the spirit of the times. A Christian woman and a mother may blamelessly resign her worldly pride, in such a cause; and when I shall be no more——"

St. Florentin could not complete his exhortation, for at that moment the *femme de chambre* of the Marchioness burst into the room; adjusting the drapery of a mantle which hung upon her arm, and gaily singing the *refrain* of a popular vaudeville—

" A la cour
Tout prend son tour,
Biribi,
A la façon de Barbari,
Mon ami!"

The Marquis de St. Florentin, who had long entertained suspicions of the fidelity of Mademoiselle Flavie, threw a hasty but significant glance towards his wife, which warned her to busy herself in adjusting the pillow of her daughters, in order to conceal the traces of agitation and despair visible upon her countenance. Then turning towards the *soubrette*, he demanded, in a tone of jocularity very unfamiliar to his lips, the cause of her abrupt appearance.

" Mademoiselle Bertin had sent a basket of the most enchanting *chiffons* for Madame's inspection;—was she at leisure to look over the contents?"

" Certainly—certainly," replied the Marquis, perceiving that his wife was totally incapable of framing a reply. " The moment is propitious,—since my presence, my excellent taste, and my munificence may greatly expedite the selection of Madame la Marquise. Let the damsel appear."

The elegant little *grisette*, who officiated on this occasion as ambassadress from " *la reine des modes*," now glided into the chamber to de-

posit her important charge; and gracefully throwing aside her shawl, proceeded to exhibit its contents to the disregardful eyes of Madame de St. Florentin, and to eulogize various fanciful articles of fashionable millinery, which she successively displayed upon her own far from unattractive person.

At length, affecting to approach the Marchioness for the exhibition of her goods, she whispered, "Bid your maid quit the room."

"Impossible!" replied the Marchioness, in the same scarcely audible tone; for she was not only fully conscious of Mademoiselle Flavie's suspicious jealousy of temper, but had reason to believe that she had been successfully tampered with by the revolutionary faction; who scrupled not to avail themselves of such unworthy instruments, in order to acquaint themselves as accurately as possible with the projected plans of the adherents of the court. Yet such was the temper of the times, that she had not dared indulge her indignation on the discovery, or dismiss from her service a person who had the will and the power to become a dangerous enemy; for the immediate connexions and

friends of Mademoiselle Flavie were forward in the ranks of the organized agitators of the public mind; and it would have been madness to attract their evil will at so desperate a crisis.

St. Florentin readily conjecturing that Mademoiselle Bertin,—who was known to be zealously devoted to Marie Antoinette, and who had been admitted, during the recent embarrassment of her affairs, somewhat too freely into the royal confidence,—might have entrusted some important intelligence to the transmission of her *fille de magazin*—a person not likely to fall under suspicion as the bearer of political communications—now affected to approach with an air of gallantry; inspecting her fragile stores of finery, and awkwardly adjusting them to his own person. With much adroitness she seized and forwarded his intention, and began with arch coquetry to criticise and correct the errors of his choice; while Emiline turned despairingly away towards the children, sick of the scene of excellent dissembling she was required to play.

"*Mais fi! donc, Monsieur le Marquis,*" exclaimed the better practised *modiste*, "I be-

lieve you are trying to disgust Madame with this beautiful robe." Then stooping to disentangle the flounce, she whispered, "Be at the barrier, without fail, at ten o'clock.—Bayard."—It was the password, and the appointment of the Queen!

The intelligent *soubrette* perceiving that her mission was accomplished, and her mystery perfectly understood, playfully resumed the jargon of her calling; while the Marquis, affecting to grow indignant at his wife's indecision of choice, allowed himself to be persuaded into the purchase of a velvet hat—"*en souris gris—couleur des plus distinguées!*"—which the Iris of the queen of fashion carefully deposited in the admiring guardianship of Mademoiselle Flavie.

Then turning towards the pale and heart-stricken Emiline, he kissed her hand, and in a tone of assumed levity, recommended his gift to her notice. Not daring to trust himself to a more explicit farewell, he bent one parting gaze upon the face of the wife he loved, and turning abruptly away, quitted her and his home—perhaps for ever!

But in that single parting look, he attempted

to convey to his beloved Emiline, his grateful sense of the fortitude with which she had succeeded in masking the agonized struggle of her bosom. Although she spoke not, nor moved to complete the adieu which she painfully misdoubted might prove eternal, he had observed with satisfaction a smile on her cheek, and a fixed serenity on her brow. Had he been a nearer or more dispassionate observer, he might have also seen that the blood oozed from between her compressed lips; had he touched her hand with a less tremulous emotion, he would have perceived that it was cold and death-like as the marble upon which she was leaning. "I will not say farewell," were the last words of St. Florentin, as he gently closed the door.—How often, how painfully did they recur to the memory of his wife!—

CHAPTER II.

To beguile the time, look like the time.
MACBETH.

DURING the whole of that critical afternoon, the heroic fortitude of the Marchioness de St. Florentin enabled her to continue her ordinary routine of arduous amusement, and busy idleness. She stept into her carriage at the appointed hour; paid three formal visits to persons unconnected with the objects which exclusively occupied her mind; and sedulously exhibited herself and her equipage at the door of a noted *magazin de nouveautés*. She neglected, in short, nothing which could counteract the suspicion that she was concerned in the movements of the court, or peculiarly interested in any event of the passing day.

At that epoch of terror and mistrust, when, as a member of the revolutionary tribunal has since recorded, "the system of domestic espionage was as troublesome as a perpetual swarm of insects; when every householder mistrusted his own servants—when friends, children, and parents, renounced their mutual confidence;"* when all the holiest bonds of society were giving way under the influence of revolutionary license, the agitated wife, in the terrors of her alarm for the object of her affection, ventured not to seek consolation or confide her feelings, even to those most intimately connected with the royalist party.

One person alone was admitted to the painful distinction of partaking her anxieties. An old steward, who had been attached throughout his prolonged life to the house of St. Florentin, and whose fortunes were bound up in its prosperity, was destined from the first framing of the project to share the emigration of a family in whose happiness and welfare his own were thus deeply involved. He it was who had secretly effected every necessary preparation for

* *Vilate, Causes secrètes de la révolution.*

their journey to the frontier; who had procured the passport, and provided the funds for their undertaking. The good old man, after ineffectually attempting to tranquillize by his sanguine predictions of success, the agitation of his lovely mistress,—whose tears now fell unrestrainedly in his presence,—promised to devote a vigilant ear to the rumours of the day; and engaged, that should the slightest intimation transpire of the desperate enterprize in which St. Florentin was engaged, he would seek her at the Hotel Nivernois; where, by pre-arrangement, she was to attend a ball, likely to be prolonged to an early hour of the following morning. And thus, in the bitter struggle of her agony, she was obliged to assume the frivolous array and hollow semblance of mirth; and to veil in affected levity the anxieties, public and domestic, which assailed her mind!

The fête of the evening passed off with the usual affectation of gaiety, and splendour of appointment, distinguishing such entertainments. It was nearly the last of those gorgeous orgies, by which the nobility of France attracted the fatal envy of a class which they still peremp-

torily excluded from their society. In England, a thousand honourable avenues conduct to public distinction, and to the social favour of private life by which it is usually accompanied. Professional and literary success—great talents—great merit—or great riches, may elevate a man to the highest pinnacle of courtly or popular favour; and there is no one so humble, nor so humiliated, but that his ambition may suggest a hope of admittance, or re-admittance, into the highest society of the realm. But during the fatal predominance of the *ancien régime* of France, rank alone,—ancient, hereditary rank,—was the pass-key into the Parisian saloons; and if occasionally a *fermier général*, or some other successful speculator or peculator, was admitted into their brilliant coteries, to exhibit his elaborate embroideries, or the unrivalled diamonds of his wife, he was compelled to pay a severe penalty for the intrusion, in the endurance of a thousand petty insults; or by the sacrifice of other thousands, more tangible and less easily overlooked. The very exclusiveness and vain-glorious pride which rendered the tone of the Faubourg St. Germain a fatal weapon,

destined to return even into the inmost bosoms of those by whom it was unsheathed, imparted also a character of dulness and monotony to its festivities; and it was in the inferior, or mixed circles, where an alloy of the purchased pleasures of financial wealth and the enlivening sallies of unpurchaseable wit was admitted, that the brilliant lustre of Parisian grace and gaiety shone with their most dazzling effect.

The Hotel Nivernois, however, was among those which retained the purity of aristocratic dulness; deigning to welcome within its lofty gates only those honoured guests, whose ancestors had been its accepted inmates from century to century. A Nivernois of the time of Henri Quatre, nay, even of the courtly reign of François Premier, might have made his re-entrance upon its familiar stage, "clad in complete steel," nor found among the revellers of the night a single *name* requiring the interpretation of heraldry. The laurels of the field or of the cabinet had interposed no vile plebeian physiognomy betwixt the wind and his nobility; for the doubtful escutcheon of a *noblesse de robe*, or peerage—won by eminence in the law—was

scornfully rejected by the chivalry of fashion; while the *noblesse d'épée*—or peerage won by martial distinction,—could rarely be conceded as the reward of heroic deeds, in an army where hereditary nobility was a requisite qualification for military advancement.

On the evening in question, the magnificent saloons of the Duchesse de Nivernois displayed at once all their inherited friendships, and their inherited glories;—their antique tapestry, where the infancy of art betrayed itself—like sickly human infancy—in distortions and convulsions; and a still more ancient gallery of pictures—which Perugino and Sasso Ferrato, Cranach and Durer, had laboured to fill with unpleasing representations of martyrdoms, and other varieties of pious horror. There was the obsolete *marquéterie*—the cabinets of Buhl or Florentine mosaic—the stately Dresden vase, with its crisp garlands of life-like flowers;—the cup or shield of rich embossment, such as Cellini was wont to forge between the visions of his turbulent enthusiasm; and high over all, and irradiated by a lustrous glare of girandoles, was spread a glowing and trophied representation of the heaven of

mythology, glaring from the gorgeous pencil of Le Brun. But what was the pride of Juno, compared with that of many a wide-hooped and pomponed duchess, sailing beneath;—what the primness of Minerva, to that of many an illustrious *précieuse* of the circle? Or how might the united pride and luxury of heathen supremacy, vie with that of the marshals, and *grand échansons* and *chevaliers de l'ordre* of the declining court of the unregenerated Bourbons?—

Among its best and loveliest—and it could still boast many who were good and beautiful —none held a fairer reputation, or more general regard, than Emiline de St. Florentin; but on that cruel night, amid the music and dancing, and sights and sounds of levity which tortured her afflicted heart, her numerous admirers failed not to note the listless manner in which she bowed into silence their eloquent adulation. There was none of the playful brilliancy with which she was wont to retort upon their flatteries; none of the piquant originality which commonly distinguished her address. To escape their importunate inquisition, she rose to join in the dance; and her pale abstrac-

tion, and unnatural wildness of eye, might have personified the heroine of Ford's terrific drama —Calantha—dancing on in horrible estrangement of mind, until her heart breaks with the confliction of suppressed emotions!

Yet however indifferent or unconscious of the brilliant scene by which she was surrounded, she could not but observe a character of unusual softness and affectionate interest in the demeanour of her partner and near relative, the young Chevalier de Mirepoix. Vanity might have given a flattering interpretation to his altered manner; but the Marchioness, secure through the influence of a strong and hallowed attachment from every impulse of coquetry, dreamed of conquests as little as she desired them; and without a moment's hesitation attributed his attentions to their fitting origin—his participation in the anxious secret that weighed upon her feelings.

The Chevalier was indeed a chief agent in the projected flight of the royal family; and it was only in consequence of the suspicions which the incautious zealousness of youth had already fixed upon his person, and which might have

served to attract inquiry towards the disguised Louis and his companions, that he had consented to remain in Paris till the royal fugitives should attain the Rhenish frontier.

"Be not alarmed," he whispered to Madame de St. Florentin, as he gently withdrew his fair cousin towards the embrasure of a window, "all will soon be well. Heaven watches over our cause; and though many among us have offended, and done our unwitting part to inflame and distemper the spirit of the people, you and yours are altogether guiltless. Seldom and reluctantly sharing the festivities of the court, living in the decent retirement of a well-ordered home, your conscience is as free from blame as your person is secure from the odium which clings to several leading members of our party. No, Emiline, *you* can have nothing to fear; and trust to my predictions, that within a few short days we shall be wandering together—with your husband, who will be unendurably vain of his exploit, and with your little girls, who are vainer than all of us together—among the vineyards of the Rhine."

"Heaven realize the picture!" murmured

Emiline, labouring to repress her rising tears.

"Hark!" interrupted the Chevalier, leaning towards the half-open window, which overlooked the Boulevards. "Do you hear nothing?"

"Some accidental passenger whistling the '*Romance du pauvre Jacques.*'"

"No! 'tis a concerted signal; and may serve equally to re-assure us both. A faithful servant undertook to give me this intimation, at an appointed minute, if all went smoothly with the—*travellers.*"

"Alas! that such precautions should have become needful," replied the Marchioness; and scarcely able to retain her assumed composure, she prepared to quit the ball-room.

The Chevalier de Mirepoix, who now hastened to seek her servants and equipage, speedily returned with the alarming intelligence that a riotous mob was assembled at the entrance of the court-yard; and that they had made a bonfire of the sedan-chairs in waiting, the tremendous flames of which rendered it impossible for the file of carriages to advance. The

police, apprehensive of irritating the malignant spirit of the populace,—the power of which had already manifested itself by many a horrible excess,—or perhaps secretly inclined in favour of the revolutionary party, took no measures to interrupt their course of outrage, or to silence the offensive invectives, and brutal epithets, which they lavished upon those trembling women who attempted to escape from a scene so appalling; and whose titles were their sole but sufficient sin, in the sight of the misguided mob.

"Repress your alarm, and confide yourself entirely to my guidance, dearest cousin," whispered Mirepoix. "There can be nothing dishonouring in flight on such an occasion; and, attempting to conceal his own indignant perturbation of spirit, he hastily drew Madame de St. Florentin from the meeting, which was now "broken by most admired disorder," and enveloping her whole person in his mantle, proceeded without ceremony to disguise her lovely face in the ample folds of a large handkerchief.

"I am acquainted with the position of a

window on the basement story, from which we can pass upon chairs to the Boulevard below. But if you value your safety, utter not a single word during the attempt," continued he, conducting her unresistingly down a back staircase, which, in the confusion of the hour, was dark and deserted. In another minute she found herself carefully lifted through the window, and hurried, under the protection of Mirepoix's arm, along a series of unfrequented streets leading towards her own dwelling. Many were the intoxicated groups of the rabble through which they were constrained to pass, who ferociously insisted, with the paramount right of might, upon their joining in the popular cry of "*A bas l'Autrichienne!*" "*A bas Monsieur et Madame Véto.*"

"A thousand curses on their insolent brutality!" murmured the Chevalier between his clenched teeth, as he drew his fair and shuddering charge still nearer to his side. "The time is not far distant, when, with a hand of iron, we shall wring the black blood from their hearts."

"Rather pray that Heaven may turn them

from their evil thoughts. As you said but now, Mirepoix, we have all cause of self-accusal at this juncture; nor would rivers of blood quench the flames we have so thoughtlessly kindled in the fierce hearts of yonder barbarians."

They were already at the gate of the Hotel St. Florentin, where the astonished Swiss recognized, with distrustful wonder, the disguised person of the lady of his lord, returning home at such an hour, and so strangely attended.

"Farewell, my dear cousin, I must fly back to the scene of action," exclaimed the Chevalier.

"Good night, my kind friend," replied Emiline, with sobs of terror and affliction; "St. Florentin will find a time to thank you for my preservation, and I pray Heaven it may be speedily vouchsafed."

CHAPTER III.

Your husband,—he is gone to *save* far off,
Whilst others come to make him *lose* at home.

RICHARD II.

THE Marchioness de St. Florentin hastened, with tremulous thankfulness for her recent escape from peril, to the solitude of her own chamber. But it did not long remain solitary; prudence required her to go through the usual formalities of her waiting-maid's attendance, before she could allow herself to indulge in the relief of tears and self-gratulation. She had scarcely begun to disencumber herself from her ornaments, when, as has been already described, a low knock at the door of her chamber renewed her subsiding alarms.

"Who disturbs us, Flavie, at this unreasonable hour?" inquired she, with tremulous lips.

"It is *Monsieur l'Intendant*, who insists on an audience," answered her attendant, indignantly tossing her head as she returned from the door. "Truly, I think he might have entrusted his weighty mission to *my* hands. For as old and as confidential a servant as he is, had he studied the decencies to be observed in an honourable family, he would have known that the personal attendant of Madame la Marquise would form a more creditable, if not so accredited an emissary of secret intelligence, as such a superannuated eaves'-dropping spy."

"Silence, Flavie! The age of Laporte should alone secure *your* respect, as it does that of your superiors. Admit him instantly."

"And the young officer of the national guard by whom he is accompanied?"

"Of the national guard? Why did you not name him before? Whence comes he, Flavie, and what is his errand?" exclaimed Emiline, her husband's perilous absence instantly occurring to her mind.

"Madame la Marquise assuredly takes me for a witch, or forgets that I have looked

upon this young man,—who is so fortunate in his choice of a master of the ceremonies,—for the first time. But his errand," continued Mademoiselle Flavie, placing her hands in the embroidered pockets of her cambric apron, with an air of defiance, "is probably addressed to Madame, rather than to me. Shall I acquaint him that the Marquis de St. Florentin is absent, lest so unimportant a circumstance should chance to have escaped the worthy intendant's recollection?"—and she glanced maliciously towards Emiline's disordered dress and burning cheeks.

The voice of Laporte was now audible from without, imploring instant admittance; and his agitated mistress, hastily throwing a roquelaure over her shoulders, and taking a taper in her hand, rushed into the outer chamber.

"In the name of heaven, Laporte! what means this disturbance? Have you received any intelligence of——"

The old man interrupted her vehement apostrophe by a significant look at the waiting-woman.

"Leave the room, Mademoiselle!" said

Emiline, with an air of decision; and the *femme-de-chambre* obeyed the command with a degree. of scorn, plainly evincing her belief that the irksome duty of subordination was drawing towards its close and with a glance of startled recognition at the military intruder.

"May I inquire for what purpose I am favoured with the visit of this gentleman?" resumed Emiline, gazing suspiciously on the young officer.

"Madame deigns not to honour me with her remembrance," observed the stranger, in a low tone; "happily for herself, *I* cannot become equally forgetful."

"Camille! my good Camille!" shrieked Madame de St. Florentin, to whom the voice of the speaker was more familiar than was his person, disguised by military accoutrements; "tell me, why are you here at this late hour —why at all—and wherefore in this dress?"

"My dress," said the soldier, looking down upon his sleeve, "is the badge of a corps which I trust I do not dishonour; and I am here, Madam—unbidden, as you remind me—in order to rescue you and yours from

approaching danger. This is no time for idle explanations,—for the deliberations of delicacy; I speak plainly, or I speak too late. Before this, the fugitive king has been arrested; before morning, you will be yourself conducted to prison, as an accessary in the conspiracy, unless you embrace the instant opportunity of flight I am come to offer."

Madame de St. Florentin clasped her hands together in agony. "My husband then is lost!" she exclaimed, looking eagerly towards the soldier.

"He has necessarily shared the fate of his sovereign, and is probably by this time a prisoner. But I beseech you, Madam, let not the poignancy of your grief overcome all sense of duty towards yourself, and towards your children. The indecision of a single hour may throw you into the hands of your enemies; and Providence can alone foresee in what excess of persecution the victors in such a cause may indulge."

"Monsieur Camille!" interrupted the indignant steward, "does it become you to intimidate Madame by your menaces, or to school

her into compliance by your self-assumed authority?"

"Alas! my good Laporte," observed the Marchioness, "let us hope that Heaven will provide me with no harsher preceptor—with no deeper humiliation than I may receive from the hands of the playmate of my youth. Oh! Camille," said she, bursting into tears, and turning towards the soldier, whose commanding figure and stern countenance relaxed at the sound of her voice, "how different are these days of sorrow and confusion, from those when in our childhood, we tended the hives together in your mother's garden. Would—would that I were now sheltered with my children beneath her roof!"

"The very spot, Madam, which I had selected as your place of refuge," replied Camille, with respectful deference. "Say but one word—one gracious word—and before this hour to-morrow, you shall be safe in the humble abode you deign to remember with regret."

"Indeed!" replied Emiline; some bitter consciousness of humiliation mingling with her

looks and words. "And may I inquire through what new distinctions, what mighty influence, you are enabled to offer your protection to the wife of St. Florentin? It is somewhat new, Monsieur Valazy, in our national annals, and sufficiently speaks the altered character of the land, that the poorest vassal of an ancient line of nobility is empowered to vouchsafe his safeguard to the daughter of his hereditary lord." She blushed for the ungenerous words which the bitterness of degradation had wrung from her lips; but Camille replied to the taunt with unmoved calmness.

"It is, I trust, Madam, neither new nor wonderful, that a son of France should be moved by gratitude to respect the companion of his childhood, although fallen into adversity—fallen through what mischance, or what *error*, it were now ungracious to inquire."

"Silence, young man!" exclaimed the aged steward, astounded at the audacity of Valazy.

"Lady," resumed Camille, in a still firmer and still more energetic tone, "the passing moment, which we waste so idly, is one of the mightiest importance;—if we lose it, the chance

is irrecallable. For ages past, my forefathers have been retainers to your own—I was born a vassal of your house—my mother alienated my infancy from her bosom, but to place *you* there; and when I became fatherless, it was the fondness of her nursling which rescued us from ruin and misery."

"Camille! is this a time——"

"Hear me to an end, and then, Madam, you may resume, if you will, your disdainful reproaches. I was deprived by a trifling fault of my boyhood of your noble father's protection, and was taught to believe my folly an inexpiable sin; but now I learn to bless the day in which I was expelled from the lands of the Duc de Navelles, since, by laying the foundation of my subsequent fortunes, it enables me to secure the safety of his daughter and her infant children. Scorn it, Madam, if you will; but after-hours will prove that many royalists, your equals in honour and station, would gladly have availed themselves this night of similar assistance."

"I am to understand, then," said the Marchioness, with an air of *hauteur*, "that I have

the honour of conversing with a faithless factionary of the Revolutionists?"

"It matters little by what epithets you may choose to qualify your scorn, Madam," replied Valazy, gazing mournfully on the unwonted expression of waywardness disfiguring her lovely countenance; "be assured that you converse with one bound to your service by ties before which party, interest, nay! even duty itself, are frail as the smoking flax. Little would it avail me to recount the feelings, the hopes, which have rendered me what I am. Let me, therefore, only boast myself your humblest of servants, and as such win your confidence to my assurances."

"I beseech you, Madame la Marquise, to pardon his presumption," said Laporte earnestly. "In spite of his jargon, and his unreasonable pretensions, be assured that Camille Valazy is still your devoted adherent."

"I must be permitted to withhold my trust, Laporte, till Monsieur Valazy condescends to explain himself."

"*Monsieur* Valazy," resumed the young soldier, reddening, "knows with very painful

certainty, that a deputation of the National Assembly, which met on the first rumour of his Majesty's departure, will visit this house at day-break, to affix the national seal upon the papers and effects of the Marquis de St. Florentin; and that a warrant of arrest is already issued against your person, as having abetted his criminal practices against the state."

"The state!" exclaimed Emiline.—"The state, which itself conspires against the safety of its anointed sovereign! My husband's *practices!*—would that the mercy of Heaven had crowned them with success; for they have been honourable as his own noble nature!"

"You have children, Madam," observed Valazy, somewhat sternly; and the rising glow of her enthusiasm instantly faded from the beaming countenance of the Marchioness.

"Your projects, Camille—your preparations—speak!—speak!—explain them all without hesitation!"

"I have obtained a passport," answered Valazy, drawing a paper from his bosom, "which will enable you to pass with your children, under the protection of the faithful Laporte,

as far as Montreuil sur Mer. I have a friend there, high in authority, who will see you placed in security under my mother's roof, towards whom, Madam, I rejoice to perceive your affection still unchanged. From thence, and seizing the earliest opportunity, you will do well to seek your eventual safety in England."

"In England!" faltered the astonished Laporte.

"*In emigration!*" murmured the Marchioness; "and leave my husband in the hands of assassins?—Never!"

"Hush!" said Camille, pointing towards the door. "For *his* sake, learn to moderate your expressions; and for your own, deign, Madam, to remember that should his life be really endangered, your utmost efforts in his cause would be utterly ineffectual, while your presence might place a fatal impediment upon his movements."

"It may be so—it may indeed be so," replied Emiline, wringing her hands; "but would even a certainty of the fact warrant my desertion—my base and cruel desertion?—No! no! I will at least soothe his affliction by participating in his dangers."

"To an attached husband," observed Camille, with bitterness, "such a resolution seems to offer a singular source of consolation!" Then starting, as the sound of some distant movement struck his ear, he approached with precipitate earnestness, and renewed his entreaties. "I beseech, I implore you, Madam, dally not thus with instant danger. Within an hour you will be a prisoner, if you persist in your rash obduracy. A post-carriage at this very moment waits your orders in the adjoining street; Laporte will aid me in conveying you thither, with your children; and for *their* sakes—for their innocent sakes—peril no further delay. Confide in the playmate of your infancy," he continued, throwing himself at her feet—"confide in the devoted servant of your father's house—confide——"

"Rise, Sir!" interrupted Emiline; "the wife of St. Florentin has courage to meet the appointed dangers of her destiny. Let them come!—I shall be found at my post,—and willing to share the fortunes of my husband."

Again Valazy persisted, pleaded—nay, almost threatened; and again Emiline, with warmer

energy, repelled his prayer. Wounded pride, or perhaps some feminine instinct which taught her to mistrust his motives, confirmed her resolution.

"Is it indeed so!" said Camille Valazy, mournfully, when at length he rose from his knees; "must a being so good, so gifted, become the victim of a prejudice,—the dupe of an empty sound? Old man!" he continued, suddenly seizing Laporte by the arm, and impelling him towards his mistress, "join in my prayers —second my entreaties—aid me to save her against her very will!—Oh, God!—oh, merciful God! grant us the powers of persuasion—her life hangs upon the chances of this hour!"

"Take my thanks, young Sir," said the Marchioness, extending her hand towards him; "but be assured that my resolution is fixed."

"All—all is vain!" murmured Camille, proudly declining a pledge so coldly offered. "I leave you, lady;—I obey your commands, and feel—how bitterly feel!—your contempt. But no matter: to loiter here were to risk my own safety, through which alone *yours* may be hereafter secured. I leave you; but if your

heart retain one generous emotion, you will repent the needless pain you have inflicted upon mine. Yes! I shall live to be avenged!" So saying, and with a hasty step, he left the chamber.

But in quitting the Hotel St. Florentin, a new solution of Emiline's wilfulness suggested itself to his distrustful mind. The carriage of the Chevalier de Mirepoix crossed him as he passed the *porte cochère*.

CHAPTER IV.

Oh, sir! you are too bold and peremptory;
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow.
You have good leave to leave us.

HENRY IV. *1st Part.*

CAMILLE VALAZY, as the reader may have collected from the foregoing conversation, was son to the foster-mother of Madame de St. Florentin. In his early infancy he had lost his father, and been adopted by an uncle, Pierre Valazy, who officiated as land-steward to the Duc de Navelles, and rented a small farm in the vicinity of the chateau; while his mother was still retained in the service of his noble foster-sister, to share whose infant pastimes, Camille was frequently and familiarly admitted. Thus honoured by the especial favour of his hereditary lord, and

cherished by his surviving connexions, the spirited boy would have grown up in perfect contentment with his destinies, had it not been for the mortifications and malicious provocations he was perpetually receiving at the hands of his uncle's only son, a lad several years his senior. Maximilien, regarding him as an interloper in his father's house, and jealous of the distinctions which his mother's interest with her lady-nursling failed not to procure for him at the castle, eagerly profited by every occasion of insult and oppression which presented itself to harass his young cousin, and to display his own perverse frame of mind. Nature appeared indeed to have gifted him with every fair and noble attribute, save the one which is fairest and noblest. He was beautiful in person, intelligent in mind, brave and hardy in temperament; but he had a perverse and malignant heart, which inspired him with scorn and envy of the upright character and honourable principles of his poorer kinsman.

Yet, notwithstanding his ingratiating qualities—notwithstanding the open forehead, clustered with glossy curls, and that mellowness of

voice which is the eloquence of sound—notwithstanding his acute wit and resolute courage, —there was not a parent throughout the country who coveted him as a son, nor a mother who desired him as the future husband of her daughter. Vindictive, and insolently overbearing wherever his personal strength and daring could second his presumption, Maximilien was abject and servile where his purposes required the aid of craft; and he recoiled not from any sacrifice, or degradation, which could tend to further his interests, or the deep-laid schemes of his ambition. Accustomed during his early youth to regard the house of Navelles as his only source of family aggrandizement, he exhibited all the zeal and devotion befitting a faithful adherent; but as he advanced in years, and the impulses of very superior talent began to suggest a stronger consciousness of self-reliance, the submissiveness of his obedience gradually relaxed; and he now calculated the possibilities of lifting his head above those waves, through which he had hitherto dreamed but of making a safe and unnoticed passage.

Unfortunately for a mind thus constituted,

Maximilien Valazy had "fallen upon gloomy days" in the destiny of his native country. His dawning reason had fixed his contemplations on the causes and relations of things, at a period when the corruption of a feeble and vicious king* began to introduce fatal disorders into the state, and to disorganize the general frame of society throughout the realm. The Encyclopedists were beginning to disseminate the doctrines of infidelity and insubordination in every class of society; and young Valazy, infatuated by the brilliant eloquence of the apostles of a false creed and utopian code of moral law, had enthusiastically enlisted under their banners, long before the development of his mental powers enabled him to estimate the importance of the cause in which those banners were unfurled.

The young and wayward are apt to challenge with but a careless examination, such doctrines as sanction their "pleasant vices;" and Maximilien, glorying in the philosophical dogma which seemed to dignify his lawless insolence of mind, now realized his first vision of general

* Louis XV.

equality among the sons of men, by qualifying the Duc de Navelles, his father's ancient patron, as a "*fou feoffé*," in the hearing of all the elders of the village! It happened that the Duke—who was as tenacious of his privileges of rural sport, as many others of his degree in many other countries—exacted with absurd rigour the maintenance of the ancient forest laws throughout his domains; while young Valazy, under the influence of his newly-acquired opinions, not only presumed on their bold infringement, but pursued his unlawful chase, even into the very presence of his hereditary lord!

The Duc de Navelles remonstrated with the daring trespasser upon his rights, in those strong terms with which an old man generally allows himself to convey his displeasure to a young one, even when both hold an equal station in life. Maximilien, however, who heard in the well-merited reproof of his lord only the imperious mandate of an oppressor, retorted with such bold audacity, that the Duc de Navelles, who was on horseback, was provoked to strike him with the end of his whip. Valazy imme-

diately sprang upon him like an infuriated tiger; and tearing him from his horse, was about to see "what blood the old man had in him," when his attendants coming up, made the young ruffian prisoner; and two days afterwards a *lettre de cachet* transferred him to the dungeons of the fortress of Biche.

The elder Valazy—one of those blindly devoted adherents to the person of his feudal lord, who existed even in England during the baronial ascendancy, and who still exist in the remote provinces of France, notwithstanding the loosening of their chains during the universal dismemberment of the revolution—saw in his son's disgrace, only the fitting fruit of his awful misdoings. "He has dishonoured a loyal name," said the old man emphatically; "and as to the punishment of his offence, be it as our good master pleases."

But there was one inmate of the farm of Grand Moulin, who did not so patiently resign himself to the arbitrary decree enforced against the recusant. Camille, who was now nineteen years of age, and who, although his nature differed entirely from the violent and assuming

character of his cousin, was sufficiently embued with the opinions of the liberal party to resist with ardour and with firmness, the slightest show of oppression,—was painfully affected by the stigma which seemed to have affixed itself upon his family.

"We, too, had our ancient pedigree," said he; "a pedigree of four hundred years' unsullied yeomanship from sire to son; during which period no shadow of disrepute dishonoured our name. But now—a Valazy has received the withering weight of a blow, and must not wash away the stain with blood; a Valazy—a free man—an independent citizen—is shut out by a tyrannous hand from the fair light of nature; and must not plead, in the ears of men, against the will of his oppressor." The impetuous youth, although he still smarted under the malevolent sarcasms of his kinsman, and still resented his petulance of temper, could not but regard with warm indignation, the infringement upon the rights of man which he considered to have taken place in the person of Maximilien.

In the excitement of the moment, he ventured even to seek an audience of remon-

strance with the Duc de Navelles, who reproved his temerity, and silenced his expostulations with the loftiest scorn; and the youth thus casually roused to a spirit of peevish disputation of the divine right and feudal privileges of the aristocracy, gradually forsook his blameless routine of useful employment, in order to listen to the secret and deepening murmurs of the discontented of his own degree; and devoted himself to the study of those pestilential tenets, in the circulation of which the meaner portion of the periodical press of France was already actively occupied. Misled by a name, he address his fervent worship to a thing called Liberty; even as the professed adorers of the eternal Sun of the heavens, pollute their faith by bending the knee to the twinkling of a puny flame, kindled by the designing priesthood of a degraded creed.

His old uncle, terrified by the delusions which appeared to extend their contagion throughout his household, vainly endeavoured to recall him to the duty of passive obedience; and Camille might perhaps have been tempted into some overt act of defiance to the powers that were,

upon the lands and estates of Navelles, had not his mother, in attendance on her beloved and loving charge, arrived opportunely at the chateau. From that moment, "a change came o'er the spirit of his dream."

Emiline de Navelles had at this time expanded from the artless playmate of his infancy, into a beautiful, graceful, and captivating woman. The charm of her character and address was universally felt and acknowledged, even by those who detected not the qualities from which it derived the peculiar fascination of its sweetness. Emiline had, in fact, an important claim to forgiveness, even for graver faults than any she had yet shown—"*she loved much.*" Tenderness of heart was the prevailing grace which shed so soft a tone over her demeanour, and actuated every impulse of her character. Dearly, very dearly did she prize the good Madelon, who had replaced the mother of whom her infancy had been deprived. Her father—and in truth the Duc de Navelles, amply repaid her filial devotion of feeling—she regarded with adoration. She loved the home of her infancy

—her birds—her books; nay, even her devotion was tinged with this feminine softness of nature; and she *loved* the Almighty hand which had still guided her through paths of pleasantness and peace, even more than she *feared* its power to change those flowery regions into gloom and desolation.

And now this perilous and overflowing softness of feeling was beginning to assume the firmer texture of womanly affection. Emiline was on the point of marriage with the chosen of her heart—the young Marquis de St. Florentin, her father's favourite nephew. She was come to bid a short adieu to the home of her ancestors; and on her return to Paris, the union which equally favoured her own inclinations and the wishes of her whole family, was to be solemnized. It was several years since she had visited Navelles, and since Camille had been last admitted to her presence; but Madelon's interest with the *gouvernante* of the young heiress easily procured him an occasion to throw himself at her feet, in order to solicit her interposition in favour of his unhappy cousin.

"Rise, my good brother!" said the gentle girl, with encouraging softness; "if your wish be possible, it is already granted."

But when it became necessary to declare the misdemeanour of the prisoner, Mademoiselle de Navelles grew pale as death as she listened to the recital of her father's danger; indignantly exclaiming, "How! did he then presume to raise his hand against his liege lord?—did he dare to threaten and to injure my dear, kind father? Go! Camille—go! if your heart still beat as truly as it did of old, you must admit the impossibility of my intercession."

Madelon, although she tenaciously shared old Pierre's unfatherly view of this ungracious subject, could not but second the entreaties of the son in whom she gloried; and at her first persuasive word, Emiline, turning her fair and tearful face towards the venerated countenance of her nurse, throwing her arm around her neck, and kissing her with the artless fondness of a child, replied, "And are you too linked against me, my best of mothers? Ah! you are well aware that I have nothing to refuse you! I will go and try my interest

in favour of the delinquent." Then running with privileged freedom into the cabinet of the Duke, she readily procured an order for Maximilien's liberation.

"I have promised one concession on your own part, Camille," observed Mademoiselle de Navelles, as she delivered the welcome document into his hands. "My father is of opinion that a more active mode of life would afford a profitable school both to yourself and to your cousin. He exacts, in short, that you should leave this neighbourhood for a season."

Camille Valazy, to whom, on many accounts, this sentence of temporary banishment from Grand Moulin afforded a welcome release, bowed his humble acquiescence; and being aware that his cousin had long determined upon leaving home, in order to enter himself as a student in one of the Parisian colleges, resolved to accept an offer which he had recently received—and half rejected—from a distant relative of his mother, to become an assistant in one of the most flourishing factories at Lyons, of which his kinsman was himself the resident director. Madelon, satisfied that he should

obey on any terms the orders of his incensed patron, now warmly urged his departure; nor did he long resist her recommendations.

"My destiny appears to assign me a less ambitious career than my choice," said he at parting; "but as it may enable me, mother, to acquire a decent competence, and render your old age happy and independent, I am contented."

"And what has thy father's son to do with ambition?" replied Madelon, gravely. "Thy uncle has turned the head of Maximilien, by sending him yonder to the city to wrangle and dispute in a noisy school; and cumber his head with learning that unfits him for a life of labour. Thyself, Camille, hast caught the parrot-phrase of his presumption, and with less excuse; for thou hast nothing to support thy pride, not even that knowledge which is the serpent-tempter of thy cousin Max. Forget it, my son, forget it; and in its stead, learn that thine old mother derives her chief happiness from her *dependence* on her kind protectors."

Young Valazy blushed for his mother—then

for himself; and repeating that Navelles had long been insupportable to him, he joyfully departed to embrace his new vocation. He was scarcely aware that the feelings which he carried with him were so powerfully, developed as to stamp the character of his future destinies.

CHAPTER V.

And grave he grew, and inwardly intent,
And ran back in his mind with sudden spring,
Look, gesture, smile, speech, silence, every thing;
Turning their shapely sweetness every way,
Till 'twas his food and habit, day by day;
And she became companion of his thought.

LEIGH HUNT.

THE recent interview between Camille and Mademoiselle de Navelles had indeed imprinted a new character upon the mind and feelings of the young enthusiast. Alienated from all the gentler ties of domestic life, reared wholly among men, and far from his only surviving parent, Valazy had acquired from the solitary haunts and occupations he had singled to himself, a highly contemplative and romantic frame of mind. To escape from companion-

ship with his ungenial cousin, and unrestrainedly secure his own, he selected in his boyhood the task of superintending his uncle's extensive flocks upon the hills. Next, he became the woodsman of the farm; and in the course of either employment, he had leisure to indulge in that visionary exaltation of soul, which, when unrestrained by the precepts of education, and the attemperment of elder counsel, is so apt to generate an unquiet and romantic disposition. The world of which Camille dreamed in his solitude, was a mere ideal world of his own imagining, and its visions were fatal to the subordinate course of his destinies.

As he grew in years, the literary stores with which his richer cousin returned from his brief course of city education, became open to his inquiry; and the new books which Maximilien eagerly procured from Lyons, and which were universally of a sceptical and democratic character, became his constant companions. The Curé of Navelles had little imagined, when, by teaching him to read, he unlocked the gates of learning for his wanderings, how perilous a path he would select; and

poor Madelon, who was proud of the scholarship of her son, as little conjectured the result of his studious application. Without pilot, without compass, he launched himself upon that mighty ocean, whose waves have impelled so many an unwary voyager to his destruction; and which, although they lave the shores of thousands of rich and prosperous countries, have many a desart island threatening with shipwreck their confiding victim. But Camille thought not of the whirlpool, the iceberg, or the volcano. He dreamed but of the flowery regions gemming the bosom of that great deep of mind, on which he sailed deliciously along;—enchanted with the varying tints of shore and sky, and wooing the impulsive winds and unseen currents which forwarded his progress.

It is not to be supposed that a person of so sensitive and delicate a cast, would yield the rich prize of his first affections to one of the uneducated peasants of his native village; above whom, indeed, the Valazy family always maintained an unsociable supremacy. In the depths of his solitude, his mind had figured forth an idol—lovely, pure, gentle, and intelligent—

on which he delighted to lavish his ideal homage; and this fair creature of his brain,—"this eldest virgin daughter of the skies,"—he had found realized in the sister of his childhood—the beautiful Emiline. Her image, in its cherub grace of infancy, was already mingled with all his earliest reminiscences of tenderness and joy; he had ever cherished the recollection of a fairy thing, whose playful steps had danced with his own—whose soft arms had twined round his little neck—whose toys, and treasures, and sweetest kisses had been lavished upon "her own dear Madelon's own dear Camille." But the tide of passionate feeling which now rushed upon his heart, rose from a very different source; he still loved Emiline, but no longer as a child; nor did he affect to misinterpret the nature of his love. Hopeless as it was, and as he knew it to be, his very despair appeared to augment its fervor.

"She is the fairest and sweetest thing I ever looked upon," said he, in his solitary communing; "and how can I divest myself of the consciousness of her perfections? Even had my birth raised me to the level of her own

still, since she loves another, still my passion had been hopeless; and should I *therefore* have been less intoxicated by her perfections?—No—no! I was born to love her,—born to be her slave; so long as beats my heart, the image of Emiline will be enshrined amid its fervent warmth; so long as my bootless life endures, that devoted passion will be its curse. In all other things condemned to a chilling mediocrity, I will be at least pre-eminent in the strength and ardour of my hopeless attachment. Not one among that gilded crowd in which her frivolous existence is fated to waste away, will love her as I do—without one evil thought—without one consoling expectation."

Even in the dull routine of occupation exacted by his new employment at Lyons, Camille found leisure for the day dreams of his memory. Chained, for the first time in his life, within the walls of a city, he soon began to thirst for the balmy morning air, and pant for the greenwood depths of his native forests. His mind was ever wandering in the valleys of Navelles;—hanging like their native lilies over those wandering streams, and picturing the fair

form still glancing like that of a wood-nymph among the thickets of the vast domain. Nor did he attempt to drive the image from his mind: for why should he renounce so guiltless an indulgence?—

" 'Twas but his taste for what was natural,—
And still his fav'rite thought was loveliest of them all."

The first interruption to his rational mercantile pursuits, and his irrational sentimental vagaries, was a letter from his mother, describing, in her usual terms of partial affection, the celebration of the happy marriage of her foster-child; the festivities of the bridal day; the graceful loveliness of the young wife; and the considerate kindness of the Marquis de St. Florentin towards herself. Nor did Camille receive the intelligence with more than a transitory feeling of bitterness. The bride was not removed by a single degree the further from his humble adoration. Emiline de Navelles had been a " bright particular star" shining in the heaven of his fancy; and Emiline de St. Florentin could be nor more nor less. " Since this marriage ensures her happiness," thought Camille, " let me rejoice in its

completion. She cannot form a wish of which I do not desire the fulfilment."

Meanwhile, Maximilien, released from his ignominious durance, returned to Navelles to prepare himself for the welcome course of life assigned by his sentence of banishment; and which no other circumstances would have induced his old father to sanction. Pierre Valazy entertained an inherited opinion, that agricultural cares and labours offer the highest and most honourable occupation to those who boast no gentle blood as a plea for idleness; but he considered a life of study preferable to one of mere pleasure; and as his garners were filled with plenteousness through his own prolonged and laborious activity, he readily supplied his son with the means of entering himself in the Collège de Louis le Grand, at Paris; and the young aspirant scarcely repined at the means through which a measure so consonant with his desires had been brought about.

Maximilien was, in fact, prepared to take his departure from Grand Moulin, in the quietest and most inoffensive manner; but the Duc de Navelles, with highly injudicious pertinacity,

insisted on bestowing a parting admonition—an intention which he announced as arising from a parental interest in his welfare,—upon the refractory offspring of his submissive steward. The impatient young man would even have endured without remonstrance the prosy dulness of his suzerain's common-place harangue, in favour of the lovely being who hung over his chair, and seemed desirous of tempering the haughtiness of his rebuke; but the Duc de Navelles had unfortunately judged it expedient to summon his whole household as witnesses of an audience so fraught with edification; and to mingle with his reproof certain bitter taunts, which roused the worst feelings of young Valazy's passionate nature. Too deeply irritated to hear his insulting lesson to an end, Maximilien rushed from the chamber; but as he reached the door, he turned his flashing and dilated eyes upon the astonished auditory; and extending one hand towards the aged Duke, in an attitude of denunciation, "*Vouz m'avez avili!*" he cried. "Reckless of my sense of torture, you have trampled me beneath your feet. Look on me, tyrant! peruse the linea-

ments of my countenance, and trace there a character of dignified and energetic nobleness, such as your parchments never yet conferred. Fortune may place me where you sit—and leave you where I stand:—nay! lower by ten thousand-fold! Meanwhile, I wait her sentence. Aristocrat, we shall meet again!"

There was a deep silence as the sound of his departing footsteps was heard echoing along the corridor and the state-staircase; and the domestics of the Duke, instead of resenting the insolence of Valazy, or intercepting his passage, fetched a general breath, as if relieved from the presence of some supernatural being; they retired in speechless consternation, as though a demon's voice were ringing in their ears! Even the young St. Florentin remained breathless with surprise; and was glad to escape to the society of his wife for a further explanation on the subject.

"Your father, Emiline," said he, "has made this day an implacable and dangerous enemy."

"Dangerous!—you surely jest. It is to be hoped that the Duc de Navelles may laugh

to scorn the menaces of one in so degraded a position as the peasant, Max. Valazy."

"It is for those who *win* to laugh; and no enemy should be regarded as powerless or despicable, who is animated by an enterprizing mind; more especially if, as in the present instance, unrestrained by moral or religious principle."

"You overrate the peevish taunt of an irritated boy—the threat of my father's farmer's son. Dear St. Florentin! consider for a single moment their respective situations.—*Dangerous!*"

"It is by a combination of spirits such as young Valazy, that factions arise fatal to the repose of nations; and in the strife of the conflict, when individual is opposed to individual, the finest attemperment of the most polished weapon is no surety against the rude pike of a determined assailant. Mark my prediction, Emiline, that in the event of any popular tumult, Maximilien Valazy will become a conspicuous leader. He unites an audacious courage with the depth of sagacity requisite to attain such an eminence."

"But why should you dream of popular tumults? This is not the first time I have heard you refer to such a bugbear."

"Nor will it be the last. The dissensions continually arising between the king his ministers and his parliament, the growing unpopularity of her Majesty, the deep-laid schemes of the Palais Royal——"

"Unpopular!—the Queen unpopular! Dear St. Florentin, think for an instant of the last opera at which we assisted—think of the tumults of applause that followed the chorus—

'Chantons, célébrons notre Reine!'

"The incident was a consolatory one; but remember also the fickleness and exaggeration of our national character. Children of impulse—of enthusiasm—the sight of a lovely woman brilliantly attired, is sufficient to obliterate for the moment all recollection of the undue influence attributed to Marie Antoinette; while Dugazon and Jélyot are pouring forth their thrilling harmonies, the imaginary millions transferred by her intervention to the Austrian treasury, became of minor importance.

But the relaxed bow is easily strung anew; and there will come an interval of calmer disaffection, when the busy spirits which have long been secretly undermining our ancient constitution, will gather together like electric clouds."

"Silence, thou worse than Cassandra!" exclaimed Emiline, placing her small white hand reproachfully upon his lips. "The momentary troubles excited between the court and the city have altogether ceased, except in the minds of a few alarmists like thyself. '*Après la pluie, le beau temps!*' says the proverb, and while the sun shines in the heavens, as well as upon the earth, come and ride with me through the woods. Surely the tranquillity of our country life need not be pestered with politics."

While the nobility of France were thus wilfully blinding themselves to the gathering darkness which gradually obscured the political atmosphere, numerous classes of the discontented were beginning to organize their scattered numbers into a common body:—like the wandering veins of a mine, they were extended

through darkness, but united by an unchanging centre. Among his fellow-students of the capital, Maximilien Valazy could not fail to encounter these widely-spreading channels; and the kindred spirits with which he surrounded himself very early in his new career, stimulated the tone of his mind into an utter recklessness of shame, and gradually confirmed his wavering principles into the extremity of democratic virulence.

Of these companions, many have since attained the most infamous distinction; the romantic Camille Desmoulins,—the witty and licentious Louvet,—and others of their caste, have been "damned to everlasting fame," as among the earliest planters of that tree of liberty, which, like the Upas, dropped poison upon the heads to which it proffered shelter. He became an early member of the Breton club; a popular orator at many of the seditious meetings of the day; an anonymous contributor to the periodicals established by his companions, in order to effect more surely the diffusion of their mischievous tenets; he was

enlisted, in short, in the foremost ranks of the petty cabal which grew, and grew, till at length the earth was filled with the shadow thereof.

Yet it was not solely the influence of a perverted patriotism, it was not alone an ill-understood devotion to the cause of independence, which united Maximilien Valazy to the popular cause. He was anchored there by a barbed and venomed instrument—by the power of *Hatred*—deep, dark, and concentered as the infernal gulph! His father having died during the first year of his banishment from Grand Moulin, the Duc de Navelles immediately extended his allodial privileges to their utmost limit; compelled the heir to dispose of his leasehold rights, and virtually expelled him from his territories. In addition, therefore, to the clinging remembrance of a blow, Maximilien cherished a recent consciousness of indignity and oppression, which rendered the very name of Navelles a rallying cry to the tumultuous passions of his soul. The lust of vengeance fevered his every pulse; and whenever

his pathway was crossed by the equipage of the Marquise de St. Florentin, and all other eyes were riveted upon the brilliancy of her innocent beauty, Valazy would again and again mutter fiercely betwixt his grinding teeth,—"Aristocrat, we shall meet again!"—

How little—amid her career of success and prosperity, amid the adoration of her father and her husband, the wakening smiles of her children, the applause of troops of friends, and the "golden opinions of all sorts of men"—how little did Emiline imagine herself to be an object of intense passion—of love, and of loathing,—to two individuals lost in that wide crowd, on which she gazed impassively as on a painted sea! Blinded by early prejudice, she would have still regarded those obscure individuals as mere clods of her native valley: congenial with the earth whereon they were born, to dig for their daily bread. She knew not that the hour was approaching when a Promethean torch would animate such moulds of clay into a frightful intensity of being; and that her own destinies, and those still dearer to

her heart, would hang upon the uncontrolled will of men, whom she had seen crouching on their bended knees, in the presence of her noble parent—

> "Begging their brother of the dust
> To give them leave to toil!"

CHAPTER VI.

Quoi Lisette ! est-ce vous ?
Vous, en riche toilette—
Vous, avez des bijoux—
Vous avez une aigrette ?
Vos pieds dans le satin
N'osent fouler l'erbette ;—
Des fleurs de votre teint
Où faites vous emplette ?

BERANGER.

MEANWHILE the younger Valazy, destined to an humbler sphere of action, and to a mode of life the useful activity of which forbad the continuance of his speculative studies, became less and less interested in the disputes and discontents of the new system of philosophy. It was his fortune, and a happy one, to live among a race of men devoted to the interests of their calling; who, while they saw their workmen thriving and

peaceable, and their looms in full occupation, were indifferent whether "the Pope or the Emperor" ruled the hour. They were, in short, uninfected by the prevailing and still prevalent epidemic mania for ruling and regulating a state, already perplexed with over-legislation; and as Camille, on his arrival at Lyons, found neither partizans nor even listeners for his patriotic declamations, and as he was now secure from the daily spectacle of aristocratic encroachment, he became less morbidly tenacious of popular rights; and devoted the exercise of his excellent understanding to the improvement and furtherance of the branch of trade to which circumstances had attached his services.

In these views, his early proficiency in mathematical studies—the sole profitable instruction he had gathered from the aid of his talented cousin—seconded his ardour; and during his second year of attendance at the manufactory, he effected a mechanical improvement which induced the partners of the establishment to grant him a share in the concern, as their easiest mode of repayment;—they wished to make him their own at any price. The gentle demeanour

and fine person of young Valazy, had also their part in securing his popularity, not only throughout the populous establishment to the well-being of which his cares were constantly directed, but among the more respectable inhabitants of the commune. He might even have realized the destiny which romance commonly assigns to the industrious apprentice, by marrying with his master's daughter; for the heiress of his elder partner had made some singular declarations of preference in his favour. But Camille appeared to be wedded to his commercial drudgery; he remained unobservant of the coquetry of the young Lyonnoise, and retained his grave and reserved address throughout the civic duties and social intercourse, to which he was introduced by the wide connexions and growing opulence of his firm. He was sad without discontent; but his melancholy, like that of Jacques, was one peculiarly his own.

The most cheerful smiles in which he was wont to indulge, arose on the occasional receipt of a letter from his mother; which, in spite of its rude orthography, and the ruder

simplicity of its style, ever found a direct road to his heart. Whatever errors of composition the epistles of Madelon might exhibit, her sentiments were never ignoble; never dishonouring either to hers[illegible]her son. Her tenderness for Camille, her partiality for her nursling, usually formed the themes of her correspondence; and even her gratitude towards the Duc de Navelles, who on the death of Pierre Valazy, and the marriage of her lovely charge, had established her in all comfort and honour upon the farm of Grand Moulin, was free from any taint of servility. She felt her claims on his generosity; and rejoiced that the prosperity and filial duty of her son, enabled her to receive the partial munificence of the Navelles family, without any drawback from a degrading sense of their necessity to her support.

And then she dwelt with such fond fervour on the graceful virtues of the child she had reared at her bosom—of her own Emiline—of *his!*—who grew, she said, in favour both with God and man; and who had now given the world a copy—and, according to Madelon, a very resembling one—of her excellence. Once

or twice she adverted to the strong anxieties entertained by the family of Navelles, its friends, and adherents, relative to the adjustment of the popular differences, and to the security of the court of Versailles. But when with these words—for they had become *mere words* to Camille Valazy—Madelon proceeded to connect the name of St. Florentin, and the interests of the little Emiline and her mother, he failed not to regard with the seriousness due to its importance, a subject which his secluded position and engrossing employments had in a great measure withdrawn from his consideration.

A secret dread of crossing the brilliant path of Madame de St. Florentin, had hitherto determined Camille to decline the pressing desire of his partners, that he should undertake the annual settlement of their affairs with their Parisian correspondents. He knew that Emiline, although she was unhonoured by any appointment in the royal household, was regarded as one of the most brilliant ornaments of the court; where her simplicity of manners, the purity of her conduct, and the perfect harmony subsisting throughout her domestic relations, were

enhanced by many an unfortunate contrast. A more intimate knowledge of the frame of Parisian society would have taught him that stars so differing in glory as the beauty of the Faubourg St. Germain—the favourite of the Trianon—and an unobtrusive merchant of Lyons, in his entresol of the Rue de la Jussienne, were fixed in their allotted courses—parallel, and incapable of junction.

But various circumstances now concurred to change his disinclination for a visit to the metropolis. Madelon's recent communications had been of a character sufficiently alarming to direct his eager attention towards the position of public affairs, and the destinies of those who were so intimately involved in the distresses of the court; and from the same quarter he had received hints concerning the conduct, and character, and notorious views of his cousin, which struck him with dismay and regret. He had been long aware by what wanton excesses Maximilien contrived to distinguish himself—even in the most licentious capital of modern Europe; and by Maximilien's bold avowal of his vices, he also knew that the patrimony of the respectable

Pierre had been gradually melting away under the fiery clutch of sin; while his own generosity was frequently taxed to uphold the falling fabric. But he now resolved to see and judge the offender and his offences, that he might remonstrate, or assist, as the case might immediately require; and while mingling in the murmuring crowd of the mighty Babylon, he hoped to gather tidings from its hubbub of the existing order of things, and hints of their probable event. He prepared himself to feel much disapprobation—to endure many disgusts in that resplendent world which had never yet shone upon his rustic eyes; and which books and his own fancies had exaggerated to his conceptions, as books and fancies *will* exaggerate.

But even prepared as he was, the *coup d'œil* afforded by Maximilien Valazy's suite of apartments, struck him as some unreal and fantastic vision. He had been told, and doubted not, that his cousin entertained a guilty connexion with a young peasant of his native village; whose parents had been deceived into a belief that she was engaged in honourable service at Paris; while in reality she was degraded to the

condition of Maximilien's mistress, and initiated into all his arts of daring profligacy. Since the period of his cousin's imprisonment, Camille had become a stranger to them both; and his recollections of little Flavie still pourtrayed her figure clad in the short scarlet petticoat and sabots of her provincial costume; with her good-humoured countenance smiling archly beneath its coarse cornette of white linen. In such a dress he had last seen her, when in driving home her father's cows from the pasture with a beechen bough, she usually paused for a moment's gossip at the gate of Grand Moulin; where Maximilien, in his short jacket of grey camlet, was leaning upon the very gun which had been his passport to the ill opinion of the Duc de Navelles. The whole scene rose before his eyes,—with its evening wood, its blossomed hawthorns, its homebound shepherds whistling towards the farm; and the freshness and simplicity of such a picture served to heighten the glare by which he was dazzled, as he entered the apartments of his cousin, and looked upon the luxurious extravagance of their decorations.

The rich texture of the carpets—a luxury at

that time unknown in the provinces,—the commodes of carved orange-wood—the girandoles of massive chrystal—and candelabra of glittering steel; curtains with draperies of filmy muslin and cachemire — tables of Sèvres porcelain, breathing bird-like melodies from their invisible mechanism,—these and all the costly adornments of the gorgeous chamber, appeared worthy of the boudoir of a fairy princess, rather than of the retirement of a plebeian patriot, affecting to sigh after the purity of republican austerity.

But if the mere outward embellishments of his cousin's dwelling excited his wondering attention, his surprise was great indeed when the divinity of the shrine became visible; even Mademoiselle Flavie herself—affecting the extreme of Parisian fashion—gaudy and overdressed—glaring with rouge, and prominently exhibiting the foot which had discarded its ebony sabot, enveloped in a stocking of brocaded gauze, and a brodequin of the most delicate silk! She interrupted the pause of displeasure which had succeeded Camille's asto-

nished start, by a forced and immoderate peal of laughter.

"And is it to gild the waste of this heartless toy,—this vain wanton,—that Maximilien has dissipated the honest inheritance, and hard earnings of his fathers?" thought Camille. "Is it to breathe this enervating atmosphere, that he has deserted the wood and the valley?" continued he, gasping under the oppression of an air loaded with oriental perfumes.

The hasty entrance of the object of his reflections, interrupted their indignant course. "This is kind indeed, Camille!" exclaimed his cousin, advancing towards him with a cordial welcome. "You have a mind superior to paltry resentment of our boyish squabbles. *Touche là, mon ami;* give me a forgiving hand. You have delayed our meeting something of the longest, coz!—but, absent or present, your friendship has afforded me more than one timely lift."

"Your good father, Maximilien, was my earliest and best friend."

"While you are the *latest* and best my

father's *son* can boast! and thus the debt is acquitted;—which is more than I can say of my own."

"In truth, the representation of your affairs contained in your last letter——"

"Hush! hush!—my hero of '*le Lyons d'or*,' do not open your financial budget before you have tasted my bread and salt. Go! Flavie—you waste your labour to sit simpering there; your grimaces are quite thrown away on this stoic of the woods. Go! and order a repast worthy of my cousin's welcome, and your own assiduity.—*Via!*—vanish!—let us see no more of you till the steam of an exquisite *consommé* overpowers your musk; Camille will be otherwise as sick of you as I am."

Neither abashed nor resentful, the humbled Flavie disappeared at his command; but not so the amazement with which the uninitiated provincial listened to his cousin's novel tone of gallantry. To address a woman thus—a woman whom he had loved—who perhaps still loved him!

"And when did you visit the good woman at

the farm? I understand that drivelling dotard, old Navelles, added cunning to his insolence—(no fox so crafty as a grey fox)—and pushed me from my stool, only to place his own favourite, your mother, at Grand Moulin. Well—better Madelon Valazy, than no Valazy at all. And how grows the walnut tree I planted by the gate?—how ——"

"I cannot satisfy your curiosity, Max, on any point regarding our old home. I have never visited Grand Moulin since my mother's instalment."

"Ay, ay; you are a prudent politician. 'Twould be no jest to re-encounter one of old Navelles's dictatorial admonitions; you have too many crowns jingling in your pockets, Camille, to endure such solemn music now."

"I am unfortunately too much occupied in forwarding the interests of a firm whose liberality has been the foundation of my fortunes, to find leisure for a journey to Navelles."

"Like the rest of the world, your powers measure themselves by your inclinations. Your time can be stretched to compass a visit to our

gay city; while it contracts spasmodically at the bare mention of a visit to your old mother's drowsy chimney-corner."

"Business alone has brought me to Paris."

"Bring you what will, my sagest of cousins! pleasure shall *keep* you here.

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

I have some chosen friends to whom I must present you—master spirits, who will one day write the world their debtor. And Flavie—what think you of the Ninette of Navelles, in her Parisian costume? What think you of the varnish we have added, to bring out the tone and colouring of the picture? You smile—I anticipate the sarcasm—I forestall your comment on the *colouring* itself."

"You may win a race upon me for a *bon mot* at a very easy rate; I intended no illustration of Mademoiselle Flavie's complexion; but I own I considered her far prettier with her simple village bodice, and artless village manners."

"Ah! you had always a genius for the pastoral, and now you measure her charms with

those of the nymphs of the Rhone. *N'importe!* we shall refine your taste."

"Pardon me! I judged your fair friend by a standard that needs no refinement; by the noble simplicity of——of Mademoiselle de Navelles; whom even yourself have acknowledged as an exquisite model of loveliness and taste."

"Of Madame de St. Florentin!—By heavens, Camille, I do not believe you have acquired a single new idea since we parted at Grand Moulin."

"No new fancies, perhaps."

"You look as if you longed to add that mine are sufficiently ruinous to suffice the whole family."

"My dear cousin, you still over-rate my genius for satire. Leave me to my own predilections—I wage no war with yours."

"Just as you please. I perceive it is your object to be sententious rather than witty;—so much the better,—I shall shiver no lance with you, in an encounter on that ground. But I see the boy has proved the father of the man; you are still the grave, reserved Camille who conned his lesson so demurely, hanging to the

old *curé's* rusty surplice. You made a little involuntary bow when I named the Duc de Navelles,—just as my old doting father used to touch his cap at the sound; and the blood still mounts to your temple when you refer to your foster-sister."

"*You*, at least, Max—can be charged with no such sin. *You* are indescribably altered."

"For the better?—Come—be courteous—and say for the very best."

"I will not prematurely pronounce your sentence," replied Camille, gaily; "but you are certainly more frank,—more cordial,—more——"

"Mere knowledge of the world. Those who mingle habitually in the mixed society of a capital, have no leisure to be reserved—no time to make mysteries and marvels out of nothing:—reserve is a provincial vice. We are so rich here in conversational talents—such treasures of wit and information lie scattered upon the surface of our earth—that no man cares to dig for hidden treasures."

"It was not frankness of manner, but of heart, to which I referred."

"Ay, ay; as we grow older our hearts ex-

pand—stretch like a familiar glove, and are worn as easily. 'Tis an art you have yet to learn, my trusty and well-beloved cousin; but courage!—under my instructions you may soon go slipshod."

"An infallible cause for stumbling. No! Maximilien, I will see and judge your mode of happiness, before I either adopt or condemn your habits of life."

CHAPTER VII.

More of your conversation would infect my brain; being the herdsman of the beastly plebeians. The best of them were hereditary hangmen.

CORIOLANUS.

CAMILLE VALAZY was not long in accomplishing a more intimate acquaintance with the connexions, the habits, and the projects of his cousin. The very night following his arrival in Paris was devoted to the celebration of one of those orgies, which served to re-assemble the partizans of the Jacobin faction:—orgies which served to minister with equal success to the social vices of a licentious crew, and to mask those dark and powerful designs which were gradually undermining the reckless footsteps of the royalists.

The unpractised eye of the younger Valazy

rested with undisguised amazement upon the group of patriots he found assembled in Maximilien's gorgeous habitation;—a scene affording a singular contrast with the "greasy rogues" who appeared familiarly habituated to its exits and its entrances. He could not refrain from glancing from the buffets of spotless marble, the carved and sculptured seats, the antique lamps, and massive plate,—to the coarse and slovenly human figures clustered round the board; while to them, these costly decorations —except in the instance of a fine statue bearing the name of Brutus on its pedestal, and commanding the upper end of the room—appeared as irrelevant and disgusting, as their own disordered uncleanliness to Camille. He had already observed that every thing belonging to Maximilien wore an appearance of the most studied elegance; while his own dress and person assumed as elaborate a display of negligence. But the short unpowdered curls clustered round his forehead, and a cravat loosely knotted to display his fine throat, so singularly became the Grecian outline of his head, that they might have been adopted to

gratify his vanity, as much as to task with reproof the trimly neatness of the courtly *muscadin*, or to satisfy the coarse prejudices of his party.

It was the beginning of the year 1789, and the spirit of revolutionary excitation,—which had not yet broken forth into those overt-acts of insubordination, of which the taking of the Bastille in the course of the summer proved an initial signal,—was slowly gathering to its full ripeness of mischief: like fatal vapours which condense their mephitic influence in the lowest depths of darkness, it brooded in ambushed expectation of its future prey. The names, therefore, which were severally announced to Valazy upon his entrance, although he recognized them as belonging to the most accredited agents of the Jacobin party, did not cause his heart to leap within him, or oppress it with an overpowering mastery such as they have since assumed over the universal mind of man. Danton, Marat, Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, Pétion, Louvet, St. Just, the Abbé Fauchet, and Robespièrre, were successively presented to the kinsman of their host and co-

mate; and the luxurious profusion of the repast to which they immediately addressed themselves, aided by copious libations, soon warmed their hearts into cordial intimacy with the new comer. They knew him to be a man of substantial fortune, and of respectable influence in the populous district to which he was commercially attached; and that in either character, he would form a valuable accession to their party. But they soon perceived that he was no weakling, to be hood-winked into a blind adoption of their principles, or stunned by an empty vociferation of mere eloquence; and thus stimulated to an unusual desire for victory, the mental gladiators rushed upon each other with powerful and earnest animation; and the tug of disputatious warfare soon excited their passions into utter forgetfulness of their auditor, and of the decent ceremonial of society.

But if the mind of Camille Valazy were fitted to receive unharmed "food meet for strong men," it was by no means constituted to digest without irritation the poisoned viands now set before him. Burning with youthful enthusiasm,

and bewildered by boyish dreams of perfectibility and social reform, he believed himself to be a pure and disinterested partizan of civil and religious liberty; and sensible, as such, of the corruption of the existing order of things, he was ardently desirous to behold both the church and state of his native country cleansed from the dust and cobwebs of time, and restored to a becoming degree of purity. He had prepared himself to join in abhorrence of a rapacious and degraded priesthood; but he now heard his ancient faith reviled—his Creator blasphemed. He had prepared himself to second their resistance to the innovations of the aristocracy, and to the encroachments assumed as the prerogative of the crown by a ministry equally bold and feeble;—but he now heard his anointed sovereign reviled as a driveller, an enemy to his country, and the slave of an imperious wife; the overthrow of throne and altar calmly projected; and measures devised and defended, whose covenants could be only sealed by the profuse outpouring of human blood. Till he listened to the intemperate menaces, and ferocious projects of Maximilien's

guests, he had considered himself enrolled in the liberal party. With rash self-committal, he had trodden the first steps of a green and mountainous ascent; where a fiery crater now poured over his head a shower of inflammatory missiles; and as he listened to the eruptive roar of the volcano, he trembled, not only for himself, but for the country lying within its scope of evil.

The horrors of civil anarchy rose shadowed before his eyes, like the menacing spectres in the vision of Macbeth. He felt how impure must be the worship of which the arch-priests reeled in licentious audacity on the threshold of their sanctuary; and whose pernicious efforts would probably fan the pure light kindled upon the altar of liberty, until its gathering flames extended over the earth, even unto utter devastation; and the spirit of Camille sank rebuked, when he remembered how often he had avowed himself a fellow-labourer in the cause he now heard advocated with such demoniacal fierceness—with such blasphemous invectives.

Among the interlocutors in the bold arguments by which these feelings were awakened

in his bosom, Robespierre alone excited his transitory sympathy; but be it remembered that the real character of this ferocious beast of prey, which in after years gorged itself in the sight of abhorrent Europe with the blood of its fellow-creatures, was still undeveloped. At the period of Camille's visit to Paris, Maximilian Robespierre was regarded among his own party, as a generous enthusiast,—simple, candid, disinterested, and exclusively devoted to the cause of the people.* They acknowledged that he was a man ungifted with superior talents; that his eloquence was purely declamatory, without system, and without conclusion. "*La Patrie!*"—that magic word, which possesses in the ears of Frenchmen, an inherent eloquence of its own,—was the still recurring embellishment of his vague but brilliant orations. "The sovereignty of the people—the happiness of the people—the rights, the subsistence of the commonalty,—"

Each cunning phrase, by faction caught and spread,

became the specious and imposing theme of his discourse. He looked to others for

* Meillan's Memoirs.

the care of every necessary measure of redress. He had no plans to propose; but left to Danton the task of suggesting expedients—a task for which he was eminently qualified by the boldness of his conceptions, the precision of his ideas, and the stern consistency of his mind.

But while the opinions of Robespierre seemed solely prompted by the frenzy of fanaticism,—so artfully did he manage to disguise the quenchless thirst of his fierce ambition,—Danton himself, lost in voluptuous indolence, was gradually sinking into that contaminating mud-pool of licentiousness, which induced him to look forward to a disorganized state of society, as affording the only cloak capable of concealing the stains with which his person was polluted. A hope of escaping the chastisement incurred by his vices, enlisted his voice in the advocacy of an irregular mode of government.

But of all this celebrated group, the person whose importance appeared to Camille the least explicable, was Marat. Disgusting, and even deformed in his person, feeble in his enunciation, and frankly avowing the avidity and rapacious ambition of his personal views, this

"*fanfaron de crimes*" would never have risen above his appointed destiny as an outcast from all the better ties of human nature, had it not been for the singular governance he contrived to acquire over the minds of the people, through the infamous Journal of which he was the editor. By addressing himself with adroitness to the passions of the mob, and by affecting a tone of hearty cordiality in its cause, he created for himself a spell of authoritative influence, which he afterwards so memorably abused. His pen was indeed worthy the vile service to which it was devoted; but there were other hands more respectable, and consequently more dangerous, which directed the periodical press towards the same purposes;—Louvet, the most licentious of romance writers;—Camille Desmoulins, the maudlin sentimentalist;—Barrère, distinguished by witty neatness of expression, and skilled by the art of plausible misrepresentation.

To vindicate the wrong, and warp the right—

Hébert, the witty libellist of the Queen;—St. Just, the echo and tool of Robespierre;—Laclos,—Raymond,—Fabre d'Eglantine,—these,

and many others of equal talents, if not of similar celebrity, were diligently employed in the daily diffusion of the tenets of Jacobinism ; and the greater number,—though each unknown to the other,—were receiving the wages of their sin, in the form of a pension from the Duke of Orleans.

But although he occasionally cast his eyes on these Journals, the organs of the democratic party, Camille Valazy had been hitherto unconscious of the designs and the desperation of their writers. He had believed their utmost aim coincident with his own ;—to strip the throne, namely, of its unnatural privileges—to limit the influence of the aristocracy—and, in the formation of a new constitution, to raise the *tiers état* to its becoming importance. There were times, indeed, when the tenacity with which Louis appeared inclined to cling to the prerogative of his ancient crown—a tenacity popularly attributed to the influence of despotic Austrian blood—coupled with the feebleness which appeared incapable of retaining the rights thus vainly cherished,—induced him to admit the probability that an unqualified revolution must follow the first innovation

marking the triumph of the popular party; which would probably become irritated by the royal resistance, and encouraged by its defeat. But his amazement was great indeed, when he listened to a harsh assertion made by Danton, that the deposition—nay, the *sacrifice* of the king and queen—would be required by that powerful body, which the Court of Versailles designated as the *canaille* of the city; while Barrère fiercely rejoined, that "the roots of the tree of liberty where never known to flourish, till they had been watered with copious libations of the blood of kings:—and that the noble vessel of the Revolution, could only reach its promised haven floating on the waves of a crimson sea."*

"Ay," observed St. Just, "a nation is best and most effectually regenerated amid heaps of corpses!"*

Camille, who had hitherto avoided all share in their conversation, could no longer resist expressing his indignant rejection of these sanguinary opinions.

"As an inhabitant of the second city in the

* On the trial of Louis XVI.

kingdom," said he, "I have an opportunity of judging the popular temper on similar subjects; and I boldly assert that, with the exception of a few lawless and godless ruffians, the people of France are still unseduced from their loyalty to the descendants of the bold Béarnois; and that however they may be disposed to resist oppression, and the wanton squandering of Cæsar's tribute money, they would rally round the white banner of their kings, on the first appeal to their hereditary affection. A name is every thing in France; and the charm centred in that of Bourbon will never become wholly obliterated!"

"A spy!—a felon spy!—a skulking royalist!—some abject minion from Versailles!" resounded on all sides, on the conclusion of his bold address. Every abusive epithet that could be devised by rancorous hearts, was showered upon his head; while Camille, calmly disclaiming their accusations, replied by a renewal of his offence.

"If there be a man of honour present here," said he, "let him *singly* repeat but one of the epithets so liberally bestowed *en masse*, and he

will find that I know *how* and *where* to defend myself and my cause; for it is that of the liberal and *honest* portion of my countrymen."

Maximilien now interfered as a mediator between his infuriated guests, and the object of their suspicions; apologizing for his cousin's petulance, and asserting that his choler had been excited by the abuse lavished in the course of their arguments upon the aristocratic patron of his youth, and the founder of his actual prosperity.

It was true that the character of the Duc de Navelles had been handled among them with the most insolent bitterness; for as a member of the ministry which had been instrumental in placing Marie Antoinette on the throne, and as a notorious partizan of the Emperor, he was at all times regarded with abhorrence by the revolutionary faction; and, in the present instance, the deepest execrations had been extended from his own person to those of his family. Eagerly seizing an excuse to qualify the expression of their intemperance, and shrinking with the ordinary cowardice of assassins from the aspect of heroic enthusiasm—even

beardless as that of the younger Valazy—they expressed their unanimous regret that his personal friendships and private predilections should have been wounded by their strictures. A hollow truce followed this apology; and Maximilien having warmly implored them to re-seat themselves, and resume their conviviality, the angry disputants could not but follow up their pacific overtures. They attempted every ordinary effort by which the flagging gaiety of an ill-assorted meeting is stimulated into the semblance of harmony. The song went round,—but its mirth was polluted with obscenity; the jest rebounded from lip to lip,—but it raised only the hollow laughter fitting its fiendish malignity; the cup was drained,—but it was with the coarse sensuality of inebriation:—and still, at intervals, many a furious glance, and many a gloomy scowl, was furtively directed towards Camille. The thread of their festivity was broken; mistrust and disunion had crept among them; and long before their usual hour of separation, the party seized some frivolous pretext to disperse.

"And these, Maximilien,—these are your

'vaunted friends!" exclaimed Camille, as the latest lingerer left the room;—"men who unite the valour of the bravo, the consistency of the hireling partizan, the drivelling eloquence of the novelist, and the morals of the gallies! Is it from the crooked policy of wretches such as these, we are to expect that national regeneration which your friend, St. Just, would seek in a baptism of blood?—Is it from a lazar-house we must court the pure impulses of health?—Is it from the caverns of vice we must listen for the oracles of the gods?"

"My dear and very classical friend!" replied Maximilien, attempting to smother by idle *persiflage* the generous enthusiasm of his cousin; "you are yourself inclined to-night to play Sir Oracle; 'and when you ope your lips, let no dog bark.' Are these fits of inspiration frequent with you—do you often exhibit rabid symptoms?"

"As you have heard my confession of political faith this night, so will you *ever* hear it. I hold myself the champion of a liberal monarchy."

"Of a free tyranny—a hot moonlight—a

cold meridian! Discerning preference! I wish you no worse calamity than the fulfilment of your own desires; but I confess I was ignorant till now, that the worthy weavers of Lyons affect to cut their doublets *à la Henri Quatre;* or only lay them aside that they may bare their servile backs to the scourge of his descendants. Nay, never look so sublimely indignant; you seem expiring with the anguish of stifled magnanimity."

"Rather with shame for my cousin—with sorrow for my country."

"A vile antithesis! Banish, I pray you, all such obsolete forms of speech. '*Soyez de votre siècle!*' Liberty and patriotism are the order of the day, good coz; and the order of the day, you know, is a peremptory order."

"Maximilien! you must grant me one further word of expostulation; or rather you must allow me to suppose—to *trust*—that accident, or that your necessities—which, believe me, are no longer a secret—have enrolled you in this accursed faction."

Valazy, sobered by the earnest tone assumed by his cousin, now haughtily replied that he wish-

ed to shelter himself under no such inference. "Without losing my time," said he, "in challenging your right of interrogation, I hesitate not to assure you, that every axiom advanced this night by my friends, obtains my hearty concurrence. The deliverers of an enslaved nation must not be startled, like a sickly wench, at the sight of a few red drops: for what is the importance of the whole existing human race, compared with the welfare of future generations?—What matters it, if a few coroneted heads be given up to the axe, to secure successive ages of tranquil government?—I am no advocate for bootless slaughter; but I heartily believe that the greater the transpiration of the social body, the more perfect its health.*—And, after all," he continued, again affecting a hideous tone of pleasantry, "the guillotine is but a bed a little less luxurious than those to which the aristocrats have accustomed themselves."

"And may I inquire," said Camille, shuddering as he spoke, "whether the party, to which you assert yourself as belonging of your own free choice, is truly so numerously and so

* Historical.

potently organized, as my late courteous companions persisted in declaring?"

"Undoubtedly! On the word of a kinsman and a true man, I was present some nights ago at a secret assembly, where four thousand persons affixed their signature of support to a measure, which I must refrain from defining to so loyal a subject, and so thin-skinned a politician, as my cousin Camille."

"Then God have mercy upon our country!" said Camille, with fervent solemnity.

"Amen!—Amen! for with a starving population, an absolute monarch, and a profuse and licentious queen, she has need of all the mercy which the universe can spare. But her day and ours approaches, Camille; and I trust, when the new light dawns, it will show you to me as a friend."

CHAPTER VIII.

How now, my lord!
Will the king join this piece of work?
Pol.—And the queen too, and that presently.
Bid the players make haste.

HAMLET.

CAMILLE VALAZY retired from the reeking contamination of his cousin's Saturnalia to a sleepless pillow; where, again and again, the momentous revelations of which he had been an involuntary auditor, seemed to grate upon his ear, and startle his harassed mind; involving the happiness of all who were dear to him in their evil augury. But the more he reflected upon the characters of those among whom the omens had been interpreted, the more he was inclined to attribute their protestations to the boastful swaggering of groundless self-confidence.

"The bee wandering among the poisoned plants of the Savannah," said he within himself, "is said to gather only infected honey. Why then should I give faith to the testimony of such men as Marat and Danton?"

But notwithstanding the self-reproval of young Valazy, he could not altogether withhold his faith from the declarations of Maximilien's Jacobinical associates; and it was with an aching head and heavy heart, that he rose the following morning to receive the appointed visit of Monsieur Delplanque,—a rich silk mercer of the Rue St. Honoré, with whose house his own maintained important commercial relations. After an hour passed in the regulation of their mutual concerns, during which the obligations of debtor and creditor were satisfactorily adjusted, the smirking man of the counter, polite as a court calendar, and apparently desirous of condescending from his awful eminence as "*mercier breveté de sa majesté*," in favour of the substantial credit of his provincial correspondent, glanced upon his own elaborate array, his *habit à galons*, and *perruque à l'oiseau royal*, observing that he was

compelled to assume a court dress, in order to conduct his daughter to Versailles.

"Indeed!" exclaimed the provincial,—who had been somewhat curious to know for what purpose the knight of the ell-wand had girded on the slender steel sword, which dangled importunately between his almost equally slender legs.

"Yes! Monsieur Valazy; we Parisians find it necessary to hold our time and our persons at the disposal of the court. Some days ago I was honoured with the commands of Madame Thibaut, to exhibit at Versailles a few *demie-saison* novelties; and having ventured to take with me my daughter, Mademoiselle Euphroisine, to assist me in disposing and displaying them to the best advantage, her dexterity and modest demeanour attracted the favourable notice of Madame; and——"

"She engaged your young lady as her *femme de chambre?*" observed Camille, negligently, and with wandering thoughts.

"*Sir!*" ejaculated the amazed Delplanque, stretching himself out like one of his own lustrings.

"The talents of Mademoiselle will, no doubt, do honour to her choice."

"A *femme de chambre!—my* daughter!—the most accomplished young lady—the richest heiress of the parish of St. Honoré, a *femme de chambre! Sacrebleu!*"

Camille rose in explanation of an error which it was very difficult to qualify; but the agitation with which old Delplanque continued to smooth down his ruffles, and his frequent interruptions of "*Une femme de chambre! que diable!*" filled up the pauses of his harangue; while the mercer of her most Christian Majesty, feeling conscious that graciousness became the lofty sphere in which he moved, and recurring within his secret soul to certain views which he had long entertained on the merchant of Lyons, at length accepted with affability the proffered olive branch.

"Ah! I perceive your mistake. It was the post of companion you intended to designate. '*Demoiselle de compagnie de Madame la surintendante de la Reine!*' Quite another affair—quite another affair! But to return to my little narrative. We visited Versailles, Sir, as

I before informed you; we were welcomed with the most gatifying urbanity, as I now acquaint you;—and we were honoured by an especial token of royal favour."

Delplanque paused, either to fillip a particle of dust from off his silken vest, or to stimulate the curiosity of his auditor; but Camille, on this occasion, prudently refrained from anticipating the nature of a distinction adapted to the daughter of her Majesty's mercer.

"Yes! my young friend, a token of the most flattering favour," continued the old man, taking from his pocket a perfumed play-bill elegantly printed on some of his own white satin; which, with spectacles on nose, he proceeded in a pompous voice to recite.

THEATRE DE LA REINE.
On donnera ce soir, Mardi 20 Avril, 1789, une premiere representation de
LA GAGEURE IMPREVUE,
Madame de Clainville . . Sa Majesté la Reine,
Gotte . . . . . Madame la ——
&c. &c.

"This play-bill, Monsieur Valazy," said Delplanque, suddenly interrupting himself through a laudable preference of his own prose to that of

other people, "this play-bill, Sir, enveloped tickets of admission for myself and Euphroisine, to her Majesty's most private and particular theatre of the Petit Trianon; a favour rarely conceded even to those permanently attached to the household. But I have not yet disclosed the most gratifying incident of the whole affair," he continued, bowing as if the mere recitation of the royal name had filled his great soul with all the urbanity of the *Œil de Bœuf*. "I say the *most* gratifying, inasmuch as I trust it will procure my daughter and myself the advantage of Monsieur Valazy's society throughout the pleasures of the evening. Know then that the amiable Madame Thibaut enhanced the value of her gift by presenting me with an admission-ticket for a second gentleman; conjecturing that, in all human probability, a young lady gifted with the beauty, and prospects, and accomplishments of my Euphroisine, (she is Grétry's favourite pupil, Monsieur Valazy,) could not be without an admirer." And with another flourish, Delplanque drew forth the precious talisman, and placed it at the disposal of Camille, who was prompted by a first im-

pulse to decline a gift appearing to confer or imply a degree of devotion towards Mademoiselle Euphroisine, such as he was by no means inclined to assume. But a second consideration induced him to accept, with becoming politeness, the offer of his new and gracious protector.

"I will become a witness to the excesses of this vilified court; I will look upon this haughty queen and her licentious train!" said he, within himself, as he entered Delplanque's plain but respectable-looking equipage; and under his benign instructions, was driven to the shops most in vogue, in order to equip himself in the trim appointed for the royal presence.

"You will do me the pleasure, Sir," said the old man, authoritatively addressing a fashionable tailor, who had undertaken to make the requisite alterations in a suit of *velours épinglé, fond vert du Nil*, which some capricious courtier had left on his hands; "you will do me the pleasure to forward this gentleman's dress, in the course of an hour or two, to my house in the Rue St. Honoré:—he dines with me."

"And whom have I the honour of address-

ing," inquired the respectful king of shreds and patches.

"The mercer of her Majesty!" said Delplanque in a tone that might have served to herald an ambassador from the Sublime Porte.

The tailor bowed still lower at a designation so satisfactory to his financial calculations. "The safest of customers!" said he to himself. "Ready money!" muttered the foreman, as he brandished his needle; and their united labours faithfully fulfilled their share of the contract to bestow upon the handsome young provincial the air of a prince; even Mademoiselle Euphroisine, experienced as she was in the tone of court and city elegance, regarded her esquire of the evening with unqualified approbation. As they drove leisurely along the route to Versailles, her own fair countenance reflected in the polished window of the carriage, probably divided her attention with that of her companion; and seemed wholly to estrange her notice from the thousand gardens lining the roads of the Parisian suburbs, which were now glowing with the brightness of their spring flowers. Valazy was pleased with the simpli-

city of her manners, and with the gentle deference of her address to her father,—a grace which, throughout every rank of society, distinguishes the females of France; but the pre-occupation of his mind, prevented him from rendering the homage due to the singular beauty of the heiress of the Faubourg St. Honoré. He scarcely observed the graceful outline of her head and waist, the dazzling fairness of her complexion, or the surpassing sweetness of her dimpled smile. A smile equally radiant still illuminated the recesses of his bosom, which neutralized the attraction of all other charms; and even if the soft tones of Euphroisine's voice had found their way to his ear, they would have been quickly overpowered by the sonorous eloquence of her pompous father; who, in compassion to the rustic ignorance of his companion, now proceeded to illustrate the play-bill and dramatis personæ, with notes explanatory of his own.

"Hem! hem! *voyons, voyons!* Who shall we have to-night?—Aha! 'Madame la Duchesse de Polignac,' the respected and respectable friend of the Queen; an object of admiration

to the whole court—of jealousy to the whole city—of adoration to a certain royal prince who shall be nameless. 'Madame la Princesse de Lamballe,' the loveliest flower of all Versailles; a daughter of the royal house of Savoy, and daughter-in-law to the Duc de Penthièvre. Ah! Monsieur Valazy,—could you but see her highness in a polonoise of brocaded silk, *couleur des cheveux de la reine*,—the new colour, Sir, which I have lately invented!—As the Queen's mercer by appointment, such little attentions are expected at my hands.—Hem! hem!—Let me see—let me see—who have we next on our list?—'Madame la Marquise de St. Florentin;' an angel, Monsieur Valazy, a very angel!—The most adorable woman in all Paris! I have only to furnish her a piece of taffeta, and it becomes the fashion in a week!"

While the enthusiastic Sieur Delplanque continued to apostrophize and apotheosize the remaining beauties of the court, whose titles graced at once his ledger and the bill before him, Euphroisine was pondering over the extraordinary confusion which suddenly manifested itself in the countenance of Monsieur

Valazy, and which was succeeded by as marked a paleness. Believing him to be indisposed, she silently let down the glass of the chariot; but on perceiving that even with this accession of air he still gasped for breath, she directed the attention of her father towards his guest.

"Merciful Heavens! what an alarming perturbation!—Was Monsieur Valazy unwell?—was he subject to these nervous attacks?—Perhaps the *Purée à la Pompadour* had been too much for his digestion;—the *Eau dorée* too powerful?——"

"By no means; but——"

"Was Monsieur Valazy inclined to return to Paris?"

"On no account; but——"

"Would Monsieur Valazy, on arriving at Versailles, desire to consult the physician,—surgeon,—apothecary,—or pharmacien of her Majesty?—The name of Delplanque would gain access to the whole faculty;—he had therefore only speak."

No!—Monsieur Valazy expressed himself already quite recovered from his momentary seizure. And Euphroisine, detecting with the

tact of her sex, Camille's anxiety to divert the attention of his companions, readily engaged her father in a critical comparison of the various physicians attached to the household; while Valazy, by a strong effort, regained his composure.

Those who are habituated to the publicity of the world, who are accustomed to see their holiest and most secret sentiments exposed to the daily scrutiny of society, can ill imagine the feelings of a visionary who, having nursed in solitude some delirium of the heart, shielded its sweet fancies from observation, guarded its hallowed object within an unapproachable shrine, and madly lavished there its silent fervour of devotion, is suddenly required to hear "the one loved name" pronounced in the vulgar tone of every-day comment. Valazy, who had cherished with such an excess of susceptibility his passion for the lovely companion of his childhood,—who had contemplated her noble graces till his eye rested with dissatisfaction upon every meaner form,—who had preserved through time and absence that beauteous image unweakened, unimpaired,—who slept but to dream of her, and

waked but to wonder that the spell still hovered unrelaxingly on his lips,—who

> Went on, gathering sweet pain
> About his fancy, till it thrilled again,

was not prepared to see his idol dragged out for common worship;—named with indifference,—perhaps with blame or reproach. His contempt for Delplanque deepened into disgust, as being the origin of his sufferings; and it was not till they reached the outskirts of Versailles that he had sufficiently regained his composure to reassure his anxious companions, by entering into their conversation.

Having argued himself into some degree of self-command, he began to rejoice that he had been thus unwittingly betrayed into the presence of the woman he idolized. "I shall find," thought he, in wilful self-deception, "that time has subdued the vehemence of my vain, my romantic attachment. I shall find that I can gaze on my mother's precious nursling, as on a beloved sister; with the same pure spirit of adoration that a Persian regards the brightness of the sun. I shall see her—shall

see that face upon whose every lineament my tenacious memory has dwelt so fondly—I shall see Emiline; unseen — unsuspected — uncared for—I shall look upon her blessed face again!"

His train of reflections was now interrupted by the complacent self-gratulation with which the "mercer by appointment" pointed out to his notice that, although their carriage bore no armorial decorations, his card was a sufficient passport with the Swiss, to admit its entrance into the court-yard.

"The name of Delplanque, you perceive—my estimable young friend—the humble name of Delplanque is equivalent to a peerage!"

But the busy loquacity of the elated cit of the *Rue St. Honoré* was soon subdued into the *ton d'étiquette*, the deferential composure fitting the time and place; and having passed in safety "the gates, the guards, the wall," and followed the guidance of an usher of the court to their appointed post, the little party soon found itself seated in a portion of the pit railed off for the accommodation of a few inferior spectators; comprising the most respectable inhabitants of the town of Versailles, and one or two eminent

purveyors of the court; among whom, as indeed among the more exalted portion of the audience, the appearance of the beautiful Euphroisine excited a general murmur of admiration. But Camille Valazy marked not the cause—noted not the effect—gazed not on the burning blushes of his conscious companion. One thought—one image—occupied his mind—*Emiline*—only Emiline!

CHAPTER IX.

Une erreur de fait jette un homme sage dans le ridicule. Il y a de petites régles, des devoirs, des bienséances, attachées aux lieux, aux temps, aux personnes, qui ne se devinent point à force d'esprit, et que l'usage apprend sans nulle peine.

LA BRUYERE.

THEY were among the earliest of the spectators; a circumstance attributed by the polite Delplanque to his desire that his country correspondent might be the more completely initiated into the mysteries of the scene; and as the boxes became gradually filled with all that was illustrious and lovely in the land, Euphroisine proceeded to enlighten the mind of the preoccupied and indifferent Camille, by severally announcing those court-beauties who were familiar to her knowledge, through her participations in the details of her father's business.

But her gentle whispers were urged in vain. Neither the brilliantly illuminated theatre—the exquisitely modulated orchestra—the beautiful personages who negligently lent their charms to the front rows of the boxes—nor the still lovelier one who blushed so humbly beside him, were capable of fixing his attention. Camille remained bewildered, and seemingly unobservant; till, on the entrance of a group of lovely children into the stage-box, a murmur arose from the part of the theatre in which he sat, of "*Vive Monseigneur le Dauphin—Vive Madame!*"

At the suggestion of Madame Mackau, their sub-governess, these infantine representatives of royalty gracefully acknowledged the applause which greeted their arrival; while the eyes of Camille remained riveted upon their box. Mademoiselle Euphroisine, observant of the air of interest with which he gazed on the "Children of France," and believing it to be excited by the delicate appearance of the young Dauphin, immediately began a loyal lamentation over the unfortunate feebleness of constitution evinced by the heir to the throne; mingled with a refutation of the vulgar opinion

that he did not share the affections of his mother equally with Madame Royale, and the Duc de Normandie.

But it was not the Dauphin's precarious condition, nor the imputed alienation of the Queen's attachment, which absorbed the earnest attention of Camille Valazy. Several children of the nobility had been admitted into the royal box; and among them, a fairy girl, with long glossy brown curls overhanging her little shoulders, whom Camille could have avouched that he had carried a thousand times in his arms, and bestowed a thousand kisses on those waxen cheeks, which afforded a faultless model of infantine beauty. "It is Emiline!" he murmured—"My own Emiline!"

"It is in truth the little Emiline de St. Florentin," observed the astonished Euphroisine; but she had no time for farther explanations. The curtain at that moment drew up, and discovered Marie Antoinette in all the graceful splendour of that youthful beauty, which affliction had not yet "clawed within his clutch;" her glistening hair was not yet blanched by the vigils of anxious sorrow, nor her clear blue tri-

umphant eyes, sullied by tears of humiliation. Her dress was adjusted with the perfection of elegance which was one of her sins in the eyes of the cavilling multitude; and even the costume of her attendant was of the choicest fashion;—for that attendant was the Marquise de St. Florentin.

"Mamma! my dearest Mamma!" exclaimed the startled cherub of the stage-box, clapping her little hands in uncontrollable ecstacy; while notwithstanding the prolonged *st, st*, resounding through the house, every spectator sympathized in the affectionate rapture of the delighted child.

"Ah! there are few such mothers as *Madame la Marquise!*" whispered a venerable old man who was seated beside Valazy.

"Respectable in *all* the relations of life!" was the rejoinder of the person to whom his comment was addressed. "As a daughter—wife—mother—friend—mistress—not a disparaging word has ever been attached to the name of Madame de St. Florentin."

It was fortunate for Camille that the place assigned him by the usher in waiting, enabled

him to lean his trembling frame against an adjoining pillar. Confused murmurs rang in his ears, and more than his former death-like faintness overcame him, when the first melting accents of Emiline's voice stole upon his heart. He felt his utter incapability to brave the emotions swelling in his bosom! To look upon those smiles, unconsciously directed towards himself;—to hear the playful modulations of that voice—and yet endure the presence and the gaze of thousands,—was a task beyond his fortitude! Motioning, therefore, to his friends, to let him depart unnoticed, he profited by the first change of scenery to escape from the theatre.

The chamberlain in waiting at the entrance, followed him into the corridor, to ascertain the cause of this hasty and perturbed exit; but Camille, heedless or unconscious of his breach of etiquette, rushed down the great staircase towards the air, precipitately crossed the court-yard, and with a distracted step and gesture, hastened onwards without a pause till he reached the overhanging avenue covering the descent towards the bridge at Sèvres. Breathless from

speed and from emotion, he staggered towards the bank; and throwing himself on the grass, relieved the horrible oppression which overcame him, by a woman's uncontrollable burst of tears. Scarcely had he at length succeeded in stifling his almost convulsive sobs, when he perceived that his flight had been pursued by two officers of the royal body-guard, who were now standing by his side.

"What mean you by this intrusion, gentlemen?" he exclaimed, starting up in painful consciousness of the ridicule which might attach itself to a predicament, rendered provokingly apparent by the importunate radiance of a bright moonlight, shining through the still leafless branches.

"I believe, Sir, I may consider the object of my intrusion sufficiently answered," replied the *garde du corps*, in a tone of mild sympathy. "The officer on guard, alarmed by your abrupt and unceremonious departure, commanded me to trace your route."

"As a madman?" observed Camille, with bitterness;—"or possibly, as an assassin?"

"In this season of popular excitement," re-

plied the stranger, "it becomes the duty of all who share in guarding the safety and well-being of the royal family, to keep a jealous eye upon the movements of such strangers as appear to consider the presence of their sovereign no restraint on their caprices. In the present instance, your involuntary betrayal of affliction in my presence,—pardon me, Sir, if I allude to that which gives you pain,—becomes the warranty of your innocence."

The young officer would have proceeded in the same considerate tone, when a police officer with two attendants—evidently charged to reinforce the military scouts—came up to the party; and with rough interrogation, demanded the name and residence of the stranger.

"Has this fellow authority for his impertinence?" inquired the indignant Camille, of the *garde du corps* by whom he had been first addressed.

"The gentleman is the servant of his Majesty," replied the young officer; and you will not, I am persuaded, resist an inquiry, which purports no offence towards yourself."

"Your name, young man?" persisted the officer of police.

"Valazy—a merchant of Lyons."

"A name of no good omen, you will allow," exclaimed the man, addressing his observations to the two *gardes du corps*. "Some kinsman, I doubt not, of the notorious Jacobin."

"It is the name of a loyal subject!" replied Camille, turning fiercely upon his interrogator; "were he kin to a thousand Jacobins, or to as many demons."

"You will, in that case, offer no resistance to the search I am commanded to make on your person. A 'loyal subject' disputes not the mandates of his Sovereign."

"How say you, gentlemen," said Valazy, who now began to understand the nature of the suspicions which his precipitation had incurred. "Have I subjected myself to this humiliating scrutiny—to this fellow's self-asserted authority?"

"I believe you will expose yourself to less annoyance by submitting quietly to an inquisition, which I am persuaded will produce only a result honourable to yourself," replied the

elder of the officers; a counsel with which Valazy complied without further demur; and great was their satisfaction—for the distress of mind betrayed by the handsome young stranger, had interested them warmly in his behalf—when the search thus unceremoniously instituted, brought to light neither weapon nor implement more dangerous than a well-stored pocket-book. Previous to an operation which the irritated feelings of the prisoner rendered galling to him beyond description, the party had been invited by the porter of a chateau adjoining the road, to enter his lodge; where, flambeau in hand, he assisted to throw light upon the investigation. All was now cleared up. The officer of police grew courteous as a chamberlain at the sight of his intended prisoner's morocco treasury; the *gardes du corps* renewed the expressions of their regret at the consequences which had visited his inadvertence; and Camille, a few inches taller than usual, was about to leave the lodge, when an officer, apparently of the household, in a uniform brilliantly decorated, galloped to the door; and stooping from his horse, received the respectful report of the sub-

ordinates, of which a few detached sentences uttered by the *gardes du corps*, reached the tingling ears of its object.

"Totally unarmed—sudden indisposition—certainly no assassin—respectable merchant from Lyons—Camille Valazy by name——"

"Camille Valazy of Lyons!" shouted the officer, leaping from his horse, and abruptly entering the lodge. "Valazy! my worthy friend—when next you permit your brains to go wool-gathering in the royal presence, for heaven's sake—and for your own—warn your friends of your infirmity; or one of these romantic vagaries of yours may chance to leave you in one of the dungeons of the Tour de la Bazinière;—I fancy the Bastile has opened her rapacious jaws to devour many a prisoner on grounds less suspicious. You may retire, gentlemen," he exclaimed, addressing the other three; "and since you will precede me at the palace, be so obliging as to acquaint the Duc de Liancourt who is in waiting to night, that the person whose abrupt departure from the theatre has given rise to such idle alarm, is a gentleman of whose good intentions, and loyal

sentiments, Madame de St. Florentin will hold herself responsible to her Majesty, should the exaggerated reports in circulation have already reached the ear of the Queen."

The Marquis de St. Florentin—for it was no other, whom fortune had thus opportunely brought to Camille's assistance—was now left alone with his young protégé; and struck by the pallor of recent indisposition which overspread his countenance, insisted that he should rest himself for a few minutes, while the officious old porter procured him the refreshment of a glass of water.

"I perceive with regret, that you are really and seriously ill," observed the Marquis, with the kindest interest; "I shall therefore defer my exhortation till a more convenient season. Emiline will grieve to find that I have renewed my acquaintance with her foster-brother under circumstances in every point of view, so unsatisfactory. I often remind her, Camille, of the *chasse au chevreuil* I used to have with you during my vacation, in the forest of Navelles—particularly when I wish to disparage the royal battues of Fontainebleau."

"Five years have elapsed, Monsieur le Marquis, since my days of servitude at Navelles."

"Ay, ay! we have heard through your good mother, Camille, of your advancing prosperity; but Madelon neglected to inform us that you were grown too proud to visit your old friends."

"My visit to Paris has been one of mere business."

"It *has* been that which *you* have pleased;—I trust it will *become* pleasing to others—to ourselves, your oldest friends. To-morrow, Sir, we return to town; and you will not, I hope, refuse to take up your quarters in the Hotel St. Florentin."

Camille retained sufficient presence of mind to assure the Marquis, that an immediate necessity for his return to Lyons would not permit him to profit by so much intended kindness.

"How! can you not delay your departure for a single day, that you may bestow it on your earliest friend and playmate?—on one, Camille, whose never-failing interest in your

welfare, has induced her to rejoice in your absence, since it has been the means of assigning you an honourable station in the world?"

"I am deeply sensible of the Marchioness de St. Florentin's condescension; although it simply repays the respect of my devotion towards herself—towards her family. Nevertheless, Monsieur le Marquis, the concerns of the gentlemen from whose generosity I derive that honourable station, require me to disregard my private inclinations, and return to my duty. In bidding you adieu, Sir, believe me grateful for your gracious intention."

"My good friend, I will extend my faith to an almost impossible limit; and believe in your good-will, although you look and speak as if you could knock me down without remorse. One word more," continued the Marquis, in a lower tone. "I trust, Camille, you have not passed your time during this hasty visit, wholly in the society of your cousin—of Maximilien? He has become a marked man; and highly obnoxious to the well-thinking part of the community."

"I feel that it is impossible for me to take

the championship on myself which our near connexion might seem to dictate," replied Valazy; "but I have spoken with my cousin only twice during as many years."

"Good—good! Emiline will rejoice to hear that a connexion so unpromising for your reputation is broken off. But you must not think, Camille, of returning to Paris on foot, in your present feeble condition," continued St. Florentin, with an air of friendly consideration. "Since you do not feel equal to wait the late departure of your friends, remain here for five minutes, and I will send you an equipage. Nay! no remonstrance—no re-assumption of your air of magnanimous disdain!" Camille smiled.

"Come! all is right again!—You look like yourself, *your boy-self*, when you are cheerful. And now, good-night, Valazy. Let your friends hear often of your welfare!"—and having cordially shaken him by the hand, the Marquis hastily re-mounted his horse. In another moment, the clatter of distant hoofs announced his hurried departure; and the sound was altogether lost, before Valazy could recover from

the stupefaction into which he had been plunged by St. Florentin's sudden appearance on the scene of action.

In less than a quarter of an hour, a well-appointed carriage drove up to the lodge, with blazing lamps; and two lacqueys in the gorgeous St. Florentin livery, wearing bouquets as large as bushes, eagerly inquired of the stranger to what quarter of Paris he wished to be conveyed.

As he rolled rapidly along, at the impetuous pace of the blood-horses then in fashionable use, Camille, leaning from exhaustion against the silken cushions, could not but remember that a few short hours before, the very cheek of Emiline might have rested on the self-same spot. He detected the *Cipre* perfume which she habitually wore;—a flower lay upon the seat, which, from its freshness, he believed to have formed part of the decoration of her dress. —He seized it, and for an instant was about to press it to his lips, and make it his own; then throwing it from him with equal impetuosity, he disclaimed the sickly and forbidden sentiment which rendered it precious to his heart.

"She is the beloved and loving wife of another," said he; "to *me*, the phantom of a dream! And what if her presence have power to stir my blood—her voice to suspend my breath; —do I not know that it is the mere seclusion of my life which has hitherto preserved their influence unimpaired?—Had I mingled—were I *now* to mingle, in this giddy joyous crowd—should I not teach myself to dismiss this chimera from my brain,—should I not learn to consider her but as one of the fairest of its gilded puppets?—And shall I meanly remain the slave of circumstances?—Out on my folly! Emiline is nothing, or shall *become* nothing, to my heart!"

Arrived at Paris, he flung a louis-d'or to the powdered jackanapes, who scornfully sought out his obscure lodging; and who despised him only the more abundantly for his exaggerated liberality.

"What wouldst have, Jeannot?" said he to his companion. "These provincials are the most ignorant boobies on the face of the creation. It takes them a century to learn our commonest Parisian customs!"

"I wish they would spread the contagion among our friends at court, my good Frontin; and teach them that a piece of gold wearing the copy of the king's countenance, is a more substantial gift than a tawdry handful of gold lace."

It is not to be supposed that Valazy's slumbers that night were less disturbed than on the preceding one. So ardently did he labour to forget Emiline, that he thought only—could only dream of herself;—and of the happy confidence of their youthful intimacy, contrasted with her present luxuriant loveliness, and brilliant position in the world.

Pour chasser de sa souvenance
L'ami secret,
On ressent bien de la souffrance
Pour peu d'effet.
Une si douce fantaisie
Toujours revient;
En songeant qu'il faut qu'on l'oublie
On s'en souvient!

CHAPTER X.

O l'enuyeux conteur!
Jamais on ne le voit sortir du grand Seigneur.
Dans le brillant commerce il se mêle sans cesse,
Et ne cite jamais que duc, prince, ou princesse.
MOLIERE.

ALARMED by the probability of being molested by further kindness on the part of the St. Florentin family, Camille rose with a determination to quit Paris with the mail-courier that very evening; and he was projecting a visit of explanation and adieu to the "*Mercier breveté de sa Majesté*," when the old gentleman himself entered the room.

Although Delplanque no longer wore his dress of ceremony, his step was far statelier and his manner more dignified than before. After a very formal inquiry after the health

of Monsieur Valazy, he began to express his regret, or more accurately, his displeasure, that the indisposition or caprice betrayed by his young correspondent on the preceding evening, should have exposed himself and his daughter to the most alarming suspicions.

"Nay!" exclaimed the irate old gentleman, extending with one hand his gold-headed cane, and with the other his ponderous agate snuff-box, "even my loyal reputation, and a respectability of thirty years of fair trade and solid credit, has been endangered by your indiscreet petulance. You have committed me with the court of Versailles, Monsieur Valazy—cruelly committed me; and I consider it essential to seek an audience of the minister of the interior for my disculpation. I have already waited in private upon the Marquis de St. Florentin; who, I understand, was deputed by her Majesty to inquire into the affair; and have forced him to acknowledge the improbability that a man of my standing and experience should share in that hot-headed infraction of propriety, which might be very natural in a young provincial like yourself."

"You surely have not been so importunate."

"Importunate!—*me*—Delplanque, *Mercier breveté de sa Majesté*—importunate? My dear sir, you do not justly appreciate the mischiefs of being classed among the friends and associates of a Jacobin bravo—a stigma which your inadvertent folly has fixed upon yourself. No, sir! I have consulted my much esteemed friend, *Monsieur le prévôt des marchands*, in this exigency, and he advises your immediate return to Lyons, and my own most active——"

"Without recognizing the Prevot des Marchands' right of admonition, or seeking counsel from friend or foe,—nay, without further consideration of a very trifling and equally misconstrued incident,—I have come to a similar conclusion. I leave Paris, Monsieur Delplanque, this very evening."

"So much the better,—so much the better. I rejoice to see that my authority has its due weight with you. Ignorant as you are of the world, friendless in Paris, and led away by a romantic exaltation of mind, I consider myself

responsible for your safety to my worthy correspondents, the Sieurs Dacquin, of Lyons."

"Believe me, Sir, I feel it altogether unnecessary to tax your anxiety in my behalf."

"My good young friend! you have no doubt an excellent heart,—I do not dispute its excellence; but, unfortunately, a good head does not fall to every one's share. As I was observing to the lovely Marchioness just now, 'Our young *protégé*, Madam, is'"—and he touched his own forehead with emphasis—"'a little in *alt*, or so!' But we shall form you, Monsieur Valazy,—we shall form you. Even Madame la Marquise expressed her perfect content and satisfaction, when she understood how implicitly you pin your reliance on my guidance."

Perceiving that any attempt to undeceive a man thus guarded round with self-sufficiency would be labour lost, Camille now attempted some formally polite inquiries concerning the pretty Euphroisine; and on this topic Delplanque appeared, if possible, more vexatious and tormenting than before. He persisted in

giving the most gallant intention to every trivial compliment uttered by the wealthy young merchant of Lyons. He chose to assign a secret signification to every word; replied with a short laugh of most provoking implication; reminded Camille that he had been young himself; and finally gave him to understand, he had introduced the episode of his imputed admiration of the fair Euphroisine into his round unvarnished tale to the St. Florentin family.

Whether the surpassing irritation of being "sprighted with a fool," tended to kindle into a deeper glow the fever already burning in the veins of Valazy, or whether the egotistical current of the old man's absurdity had exhausted itself, Delplanque now became suddenly struck by the change which a few short days had wrought in the appearance of Camille. He insisted on feeling his hand—his pulse; pronounced him to be in a raging fever; and having resolved on summoning to their councils on this occasion, a coadjutor less offensive to the sufferer than the *Prévôt des Marchands*, in the guise of a skilful family physician, he found

himself compelled to yield to their importunities, and enter his bed instead of a travelling carriage. A cold caught on his journey and neglected during the press of business—the "potations pottle deep," and the intense excitement of his cousin's detested orgies, and more than all, immersion in the night dews of Sèvres after the enervating atmosphere of the court-theatre, had united to produce a virulent fever in his constitution. In the course of the night, Camille became delirious; and on the second day, his life was despaired of!

Delplanque, with officious zeal, now judged it expedient to call at the Hotel St. Florentin, and acquaint the Marquis with the imminent danger of "that young scapegrace, our friend, the merchant from Lyons," in whose destiny he had deigned to interest himself; and Emiline, knowing the existence of the "young scapegrace" to be vitally precious to a person whose happiness was sacredly dear to herself, immediately despatched an express to Grand Moulin, to apprize the good Madelon of the desolate and hazardous situation of her only

son; and on the fifth night of the unconscious Camille's overwhelming attack, his mother was watching by his bedside. For days, for weeks, he lingered on the extreme verge of the grave; unconsciously raving of past recollections and chimeras for the future; and lavishing on many a careless ear those hallowed secrets of his heart, which he had thought to yield but with his life.

At length the force of youth, unimpaired by excess, and the vigilance of careful tending, restored him progressively to consciousness, to motion, to strength; and soon the only symptom remaining of the oppression of his severe illness, was a sobered demeanour, and a still more subdued mood of mind. He learnt with gratitude, and gratitude *alone*, that the St. Florentins had been unceasing in their attentions to Madelon and to himself, throughout the period of his sufferings.

"It is well, mother!" replied Camille; "time will probably afford me an occasion to mark my sense of their kindness."

"But now that you have consented to return home with me, my dear son, and perfect

your recovery in your natal air, you must not leave Paris without acknowledging, by a parting visit to the Marchioness,—to my own sweet angel Emiline—that you are grateful for her interest in your sufferings."

"No, mother! no;—*they* are noble, *I* am base!—The very hireling at their gate would disavow and despise me; and no relations can exist between us, but such as are found embarrassing by them, and humiliating by myself. No, mother! no;—let them be content with the proud consciousness that they have conferred an obligation."

On arriving, however, at Grand Moulin, this ferocious spirit of independence subsided into a milder feeling, when he perceived the affectionate care with which Madame de St. Florentin had laboured to surround the guardian of her childhood with all those flattering luxuries rendered necessaries to Madelon by her long domestication among the rich and the noble. Without ostentation, the most considerate tenderness seemed to have suggested every arrangement for her personal comfort; and Camille watched over his mother as she dozed in her

easy chair, without wondering that she should dream of Madame la Marquise, as of a superior being.

But it was not *as* Madame la Marquise that Madelon either thought or dreamed of her foster-child. However her *speech* might define the lady of St. Florentin, to her *heart* she was still "Emiline," as truly and as tenderly as in the days when she was wont to guide her little footsteps among the parterres of the Chateau de Navelles:—she was *Emiline* in the prayers nightly offered to the Almighty for her welfare;—she was *Emiline* in that morning burst of joyful thankfulness, with which she went forth to enjoy her benefits, and sun herself in the light of Heaven. Madelon, the daughter and widow of a vassal of the Duc de Navelles, pretended neither to gentle birth nor gentle breeding, but she was wholly uncontaminated by vulgarity of mind. She spoke, it is true, the dialect of her native village,—but it served to express the sentiments of an honest and generous heart. She saw no further into things than met the eye or ear,—but she saw them undistorted by malicious interpretation. She

had loved the infant Emiline more as a daughter of her hereditary lord, than as a charge capable of ensuring her own future fortunes; and she loved Emiline, the lady Marchioness, as her nurseling—her own—her *fille-de-lait*—her child in all but blood!—nay, even Camille himself, her only son, claimed not so close an adoption in her heart; for strange to tell, she felt *his* superiority over herself, with a more marked consciousness than that of the Marchioness de St. Florentin. *His* honours were all acquired: she had seen his gradual ascent towards his present height of prosperity; while Emiline's dignity of station appeared in Madelon's eyes a part of her original self. But although embarrassed by the sense of her son's superiority, she dearly loved him; was proud of his talents and of his virtues; and was moreover, peculiarly tenacious not to intrude upon his path, so as to humiliate him by the evidence of her former servitude, or give him reason to wish he had a finer lady or a better scholar for his mother.

But Madelon's humility was not unmingled with pride. She would have scorned to assume the appearance of a condition to which, of in-

herited right, she did not belong. Notwithstanding her opulent circumstances, and the deference with which she was regarded among the vassalry and tenantry of the Duke, she retained her provincial costume as exactly as the poorest peasant of the village. The lace gathered round her wide-winged cap might be of finer texture, and the golden cross and earrings of more costly workmanship; but instead of the flimsy, self-important "Madame Valazy," which many would have sought to appear under similar pretensions, she chose to remain "*la bonne Madelon*;" although perhaps a little tinged with a wealthy farmer's vanity in her linen-presses,—her walnut-wood furniture,—her twenty-five silver *converts*,—her yellow carnations,—and unrivalled dairy! She boasted a breed of bantams, too, which was the envy of the neighbourhood; but it was the only possession of which she *boasted*; for she had never been known to allude to her son's acquired gentility, or to her Emiline's faithful affection.

It was this very independence of spirit which rendered her so dear to Camille.—He felt himself ungifted with a similar superiority to

common opinion and vulgar prejudice; and to him, this long-delayed visit to Grand Moulin was a source of equal triumph and humiliation. He had left the village a peasant—he returned to it a gentleman; and he rejoiced in the feebleness of health which, retaining him within the limits of the farm, secured him from provoking that envy, hatred, and malice, which infallibly attend the elevation of a *parvenu*.

For five long years he had been imprisoned within the walls of a city;—"the pomp of groves and garniture of fields" had long become unfamiliar to his eyes. Accustomed to the daily contemplation of the begrimed walls of Lyons, and to the oppressiveness of a populated atmosphere, the fresh breeze of the wide woodlands, and the soft verdure of a bursting spring, excited within his heart a sense of enjoyment, painful from its very intensity. It was so long since he had offered the sacrifice of gratitude to the Creator upon his own mighty altar, that his heart throbbed with the consciousness of its prolonged neglect; and as he fixed his aching eyes on the sweep of wooded uplands, the silvered orchards, and winding waters surround-

ing the farm, "the peopled desart past" subsided into its real insignificance in his estimation; and "the fickle breath of popular applause" became that empty echo which the ear of wisdom disavows. The unchangeable face of Nature, shining with its eternal smile, and reminding him that while empires pass into oblivion, and dynasties vanish from the world, the rolling river abideth—the fountains of the great deep lose not a drop through the lapse of ages—and the foundations of the hills stand "so fast that they cannot be moved,"—caused him to smile when he remembered the bootless vehemence of the factions of Paris!

But if Camille Valazy indulged at times in philosophical reflections, a more frequently-recurring consideration arose from the remembrance of Emiline, as connected with Navelles and with its scenery. Nor, had he been so minded, could he have dismissed her treasured image from his thoughts; for Madelon, in every passing object, and every passing hour, found themes on which to ground her praises. And when he saw his mother's fair, round, good-humoured face break into smiles whenever

she began to talk of "her dearest child," how could he ungraciously dismiss the subject?—In very truth, he could have listened for ever.

One day, Camille had been dragging his listless limbs round the garden of Grand Moulin, humouring his mother's pride in her early lettuces, and listening to her predictions respecting the first opening of her rosebuds—for they flourished in modest emulation side by side—when he paused for a moment to rest himself in the trimly arbour of hornbeam, which in his boyhood he had so often assisted to train, and which, for want of his recent assistance, was now overgrown by a matted mass of honeysuckles, through which the officious bees were pushing their peculations with a murmur of self-satisfaction. Madelon, following his feeble steps, seated herself for a moment by his side, to admire the busy activity of her hovering ministers and favourites—for the reputation of her honeycomb vied with that of her dairy;—till allured by the propitious influence of the scene and hour, into the indulgence dearest to a Frenchwoman—an undisturbed *causerie*—she commenced a skirmish of

gossipry, which her son readily anticipated would terminate in an important attack. From her very commencement of "*Ah! ça, mon ami! dis donc un peu,*" he foresaw that he should be required to *say* every thing which he most wished should remain unsaid.

After rallying him with village freedom upon his evident pre-occupation of mind, and attributing to his love of reverie the seclusion he had maintained since his arrival at Navelles, she suddenly exclaimed, "Well! she is in truth a sweet creature; and let them say what they will, I cannot wonder at the devotion of your attachment."

All the blood in Camille's wasted frame rushed into his face at this strange avowal of his mother's participation in his mystery. "Can it be possible," he faltered, "that you are mistress of a secret I have guarded so vigilantly?"

"*Oui dà!*" replied Madelon, half-laughing at his earnestness; "my last journey to Paris taught me many a secret. Did I not watch by your pillow, child?—did I not listen to all your sighings, and murmurings, and ravings of her beauty, and of your own tenderness, and

of all such sing-song fancies? To hear your protestations, Camille, no one on earth ever loved so fondly before."

"I would that such a persuasion had been in truth but the raving of my delirium! I *do* love her, mother, as none ever loved before. *Who*, like me, has defied the power of time and absence and probability?—who, like me, has loved without even the wish to hope?"

"*Plait-il?*" said Madelon. "Without a wish to hope!—Why, what can a fine young fellow like my Camille have to fear?"

"Mother, you deceive yourself and me."

"*Nenni, nenni, mon fils!* I had scarcely found my way to your secret, child, and detected this wonderful passion of yours, before I discovered that it was as warmly returned;—returned!—ay, and fifty-fold. She will not own it, Camille, but she loves the very ground you walk upon, and——"

"False!—false!—did an angel speak it!" exclaimed Valazy, with indignant vehemence; and Madelon, who was gazing on his haggard countenance, became apprehensive that the consequences of his fever had affected his brain.

"Nay," she answered, in a deprecating tone, "I tell you only what I heard myself from the dear Marchioness's sweet lips."

"Mother!" exclaimed Camille, his own tremulous with emotion, while unconsciously he grasped her arm; "mother, have a care!—one word more or less than the truth will indeed drive me to madness."

"My own son!—my own dear son!" whispered Madelon soothingly, as she laid the fond pressure of a mother's embrace upon his shoulder; "am I wrong in revealing to you what my other child, my daughter Emiline, acknowledged to me? Ay, Camille,—flout me as you will—she told me the whole secret as we were watching together by your sick bed: she had been bending over you, and listening to your incoherent lamentations——"

"How!—can it be possible?—explain yourself, mother! My senses seem wandering this morning; or did I rightly understand you, that Emiline de St. Florentin watched by *my* bed of sickness?"

"In truth, did she—ay, Camille, hour after hour, and day after day,—although she bade

me keep her condescension a secret from your ungracious self."

Valazy, whose mind was now excited beyond his own control, rushed from the arbour, traversing with hasty but tottering steps the turfen paths of the garden; while Madelon relieved the oppression of her terror and concern, by bursting into an agony of tears.

She was still stifling her sobs with her hands, when she felt them pressed by a cold touch; and looking up, perceived Camille again standing beside her. In those few moments of absence, an age of passion had rolled over his head—an age of agony had racked his heart. His lips were pale and quivering, his brow livid, his eyes dilated.

"Mother!" said he, in a tone intensely low, "I have heard from your mouth this day, what else no bribe, no threat, had tempted me to believe. But *you* would not slander her;—no,—no,—no,—you would not breathe one calumnious word against *her!* I would I had never heard it—I would 'twere all unsaid, so I might calm the throbbing here"—he laid his hand heavily on his bosom—"and think of her again

as I have ever done. But no matter; you have touched the rock, and the stream which has issued forth is a stream of lava. Is that your fault, mother,—or is it mine?—'Tis her's —'tis her's—but again I say, no matter. I am going back to Paris this night, this hour; henceforth there is no breath on earth for me, but where *she* breathes."

Madelon, now more and more convinced of the delirium of her son, gently attempted to dissuade him from a project apparently the result of madness. "Nay, nay, I will not hear of your going yet, Camille; your strength is unequal to the exertion. Can you not write to her father?"

"To *whom*?"

"To her father; for as long-winded and tiresome and self-sufficient as he is, the Marchioness assured me that he favoured your mutual passion."

"Mother, 'tis *you* who are raving now."

"To the good Marquis, then; so kindly as our Emiline has disposed him in your favour, I am persuaded he would condescend on this occasion to become your advocate."

"You will drive me distracted by these mockeries."

"Nay, after all, could the old gentleman do better for his daughter?—For though in sooth Mademoiselle Euphroisine is, as I have always said, a fair and gentle young lady, and well to do in the world, still my Camille has a right to claim a bride as pretty as the best."

"Euphroisine!"

"The word must out at last, though you have chosen to keep the secret so long, and with such girlish coyness."

"*Who* said that Euphroisine loved me?" exclaimed Valazy, fiercely.

"My child said it—our own dear Emiline."

"And *where*, mother,—when did she tell you so?"

"By the side of your sick bed, Camille. We had been weeping together over your increasing danger, and for many, many hours you had been raving of your tenderness for some beloved creature; for *you* never *named* her. Even while you were protesting your attachment, my son, before all those who were attending you, you still kept swearing that no

power should ever rend the secret from your bosom. And when, in my perplexity, I turned to the Marchioness for an explanation, she told me all.—You are not angry?"

"*What* all? Speak out, while I have patience to listen."

"Good truth, 'twas little enough! She said that the busy old gentleman, whose officious intrusions upon us just then were so tormenting, came but as a messenger from his daughter, who loved you to distraction. She herself had seen you together, she said, at some public spectacle, where a jealous pique on Mademoiselle Euphroisine's account, had driven you almost to frenzy; and the good Monsieur Delplanque immediately judged it his duty to acquaint the Marquis and herself, as your friends, with all the circumstances."

"Intolerable ideot!"

"But so little did the worthy man disapprove your attachment, and, according to my Emiline's account, so well was the degree and character of his daughter assorted to your own, that she was wholly at a loss to conjecture what

had suddenly driven you to such an extremity of despair."

"Despair?"

"Yes; repeatedly, during the paroxysms of your disorder, you spoke of your utter hopeless ness—of having vainly striven to drive the sweet image from your heart—of——"

"And Emiline listened to the cries of my agony, yet knew so little to interpret their meaning; so little dreamed of my devotion towards herself!"

"Pardon me, Camille, the gracious Marchioness confides as truly in your attachment as in my own," replied Madelon, who was as incapable of imagining the possibility of a profane passion for the pure Emiline, as for the holy Madonna herself.

"Mother, you do not know—you cannot guess the depth of my love for my foster-sister."

"I can—I can, my son!" exclaimed Madelon, gratefully kissing his forehead. "And oh! cherish that sacred affection, for it is the pride and comfort of your old mother's life. Indulge

what whims you will in your fondness for Delplanque's daughter; but let your true and supreme attachment to the sister who shared my cares for your childhood, remain your first impulse."

Camille, unwilling to give her pain, made a signal of acquiescence, and withdrew from her presence. "Excellent woman!" murmured he, as he paced slowly homewards. "Incapable of framing the thought of sin, her matronly mind cannot imagine such monstrous disproportion as my love for the wedded child of a noble father! Still may thy purity, my best of mothers, continue to deceive thee; for the weight of thy curse would fall heavy on my head. That moment of misconstruction and flattering deceit was a bitter trial;—but I do not wish it had proved real—oh, no! I do not, dare not wish it."

"Now Heaven have mercy on my son!" thought Madelon, as she also took her meditative way towards the farm. "Book-learning, and arguing, and all the new whim-whams which the Marchioness assures me are rife at Paris—with Max Valazy, the ill-conditioned

ruffian—as the prophet of the gang—have turned his head! He will love,—and he won't love; he will away to Paris to-day—he will back to Lyons to-morrow; and then to speak of his devotion to my sweet child, as if it were a sin he blushed for! Ah! Camille—Camille! it was an evil day, and evil chance, that made thee a gentleman, if thy poor brains cannot bear thee up through thy elevation. God send thee sense!—thou hast, no pride of body,—but if there be such a thing as pride of thought, *that pride* thou hast my son, and sorely. I would I knew how his bewilderment would end," thought the good old woman, as she seated herself at her ebony wheel; and to ease her perplexity, or beguile her affliction, began to spin with as diligent an alacrity as one of the Destinies.

CHAPTER XI.

J' ai par dessus vous
Ce plaisir si flatteur à ma tendresse extrême,
De tenir tout du bienfaiteur que j'aime ;
De voir que ses bontés font seules mes destins,—
D'être l'ouvrage heureux de ses augustes mains.

ZAIRE.

DREADING that the foregoing scene would be renewed, or might have already wakened suspicions in his mother's honest heart, Camille Valazy seized the first letter he received from Lyons, as a pretext for his immediate return.

"I leave you happy here," said he, at parting,—and he gazed wistfully as he spoke, around the well-ordered arrangements of the thriving farm. "Your simple occupations, mother, and prosperous industry, satisfy your heart. The varying seasons bring you a change of cares and pleasures, which preserve you from *ennui* and ——"

"*Ennui!*" said Madelon, turning her fresh healthy smile upon her son. "Those who rise with the sun, Camille, and labour till its setting, have no leisure for whimsies. I know not how 'tis—but I have ever a happy prospect before me. To-morrow, the first scythe is to be laid to my wheat—and saw you ever a likelier harvest?—Then scarcely will the songs of my husbandmen's *fête* be silenced, when—quick—quick—the vintage! every hand to the vintage; and saw you ever a fairer crop than in the home vineyard, and on the *côte?* Then, long, long before the wine-press has done its work, then—*then* comes my real *fête*—the dear happy crowning moment of my year;—guess what it is, Camille!"

"Nay! I know not; you must forgive me, mother, if my country knowledge has somewhat escaped my memory. I cannot recollect any further autumnal pleasure of the fields;—unless, like our neighbour Madame du Brac, you have a fancy to commemorate the festival of St. Hubert, by riding home from the forest with a couple of wolves at your saddle-bow."

"And so rob poor Caval the ranger, of his

forest fee?" said Madelon, her short laugh ringing joyously at the idea. "But now, guess again!—you cannot? Ah! you are such a stranger at Grand Moulin, that you know not half its pleasures! Learn, then, that one calm soft evening, at the close of the vintage, just when all is still—still—in the twilight, except the whistle of the shepherds folding their flocks in the pastures, I shall hear a distant roll of wheels, and then a long shout, and a burst of warm acclamations in the village; and then a hundred neighbours will come bustling in with the one same word on their lips, 'Our good master is come! the gracious Marchioness is come!' And then I shall not close my eyes for blessing myself that night; and in the morning, long before the dew is off, a gentle tap, and '*Bon jour, ma chère bonne! comment ça va?* and then a sweet kiss—and the little ones creeping in with their '*Bon jour, la mère Madelon,*' and 'Is not Emiline grown? look at Aglaé's curls!' Or perhaps, 'And what news from Lyons? my dear good nurse?' Oh! 'tis such a happy moment!" said Madelon, with

the tears rolling down her cheeks at the thought.

"And then the round of the farm!—Madame la Marquise must needs visit the barn-yard, to see the game-bantams; and the young ladies must have a look at the hives, and taste the new honey-comb; and then—and then—I find when the little fairies are gone, all my flax entangled on the reel—and, 'tis such pleasure to set it right again. But forgive me, my son! I speak of pleasure, and you are about to leave me."

"Our parting should always be cheerful, mother! Since destiny decrees us to live apart, let me rejoice that you have friends who supply my place, and to whom your happiness is precious as to myself. But should any future change decrease that flattering interest, or the activity of a farmer's life become too much for your declining years, you must come home to your Camille, and accept from him only, the tenderness and respect which you have so much right to command in his heart. God bless you, mother!" said Va-

lazy, with that filial salute from which no age exempts the affectionate children of French parents

"And you, my brave son!" said Madelon, laying her hand upon his head. Then with tearful eyes she followed his departing footsteps from the village, the jealous comments of which he cared not to provoke by the sight of his travelling carriage.

"There he goes—good, and true, and handsome as a prince! and as Madame herself observed, it would be a sin indeed if he should ever become infected by the thoughts and ways of his cousin Max. Well—well! let him marry Mademoiselle Euphroisine; her pretty modest smile and rich dotation, are not to be despised; and he will then have other thoughts to occupy his flighty brains, than to trouble himself concerning what advisers our good lord the King shall take to his councils—or what ladies her gracious Majesty shall gather round her court. What are court or council to him or me, or our likes? *Ah! 'la mère Madelon—la mère Madelon! tout à l'heure mes amis!—tout à l'heure, ma fi.* See if I can steal half an hour for my

own indulgence without being called here, and wanted there! *Allons, allons; la boutique avant tout.*"

Once more engaged in the important concerns of his manufactory, the mind of Camille Valazy regained its former tone of moderation and tranquillity. He felt that an enormous capital, and the well-being of his patrons, was implicitly confided to his prudence and industry; and what afforded a still more engrossing interest to his heart, the existence of five hundred workmen, with their families, was dependent on his success. The domestic legislation of this little state offered continual calls on his time and feelings; for there is scarcely a condition of life which comprehends such varieties of excitement, as that which brings an individual into close contact with a large portion of humble fellow-creatures, whose prosperity hangs upon his single will. The interest entertained by a sovereign for the provinces of his kingdom, is far less intimate and intense than that of the manufacturer to whom thousands look with reliance for their daily bread.

In that degree of Lyonese society which

Camille frequented as an equal, the state of public affairs now excited the warmest interest, but it was discussed with a qualified view to the emancipation of the *tiers état*, in which he wholly sympathized. The wealthy merchants of Lyons were naturally attached to the maintenance of that class of the aristocracy whose luxury was the foundation of their fortunes. They were attached also to the *abstract* idea of their hereditary sovereign; they loved the *name* of Bourbon; but they were royalists with a determination to enforce a more liberal constitution. "We adopt in our machinery," said they, "every improvement suggested by the discoveries of modern science.—Be the loom of the state as wisely and as peaceably reformed;—its wheels will spin the easier, and their increased velocity produce a more even texture,—a more polished surface."

Under these expectations, the assembling of the States-general of the kingdom shortly after Valazy's return from Paris, was regarded as a first constitutional blow struck against the abuses of a corrupt government; and was hailed as such with universal gratulation. The

taking of the Bastille, however,—the second incident of the awful drama, and the first *popular* movement,—was attended by acts of outrage, which induced Camille to revert with alarm to the predictions of Maximilien and his associates; while the insurrection which shortly followed, connected with the events of the 5th and 6th of September, sufficiently justified his increasing anxiety.

It is needless to follow with close accuracy the march of public events which, from that period till the summer of 1791,—the epoch of our story's commencement,—wore an appearance of gradually deepening mischief, fatal to the hopes of the royalists of France, and terrific to the court of Versailles. Neither is it requisite to revert to the equally familiar and far more interesting picture of the sufferings of its royal inmates; who, from the period of their compulsory removal to the palace of the Tuileries, to their attempted escape from the polluted home of their ancestors, endured an iron bondage which must be considered as one of the gloomiest and severest pages offered to the schooling of princes. But there were individual destinies

connected with these calamities, which, if less generally known, are scarcely less deserving of interest.

The Marquis and Marchioness de St. Florentin, although forming no part of the royal household, nor provoking through undue favouritism the evil will of the populace, had not so wholly escaped its censures as their kinsman the Chevalier de Mirepoix thought proper to assert for the re-assurance of his lovely cousin. Maximilien Valazy, who had his own views in augmenting their unpopularity, had taken care that their names should be defiled by frequent introduction into the pages of his friend, the infamous Hébert. He had no direct accusal with which to brand their innocence; but

> To hint a fault and hesitate dislike,—

to associate the unoffending with the guilty, even by a disjunctive conjunction,—to bring them perpetually upon the stage of shame, even without involving them in the action of the piece,—is one of those arts of faction, by which the brightest character, though "pure as the snow that hangs on Dian's temple," may become

" begrimed and black" as the foul end to which it is sacrificed.

The King and Queen forewarned, by many disastrous signs and omens, of the perils which were about to extend from their own persons to those of their adherents, had already persuaded many of their nearest and dearest friends to seek safety in emigration; and had even addressed their gracious commands to the veteran Duc de Navelles, and the St. Florentin family, to quit their native country during the prevalence of civil anarchy.

We will spare our readers the verbose reply of the stanch old man; his sentiments, although involved in a flimsy web of diffuse eloquence, were worthy the nobleness of his loyal name. The honourable resolution set forth at the same time by his son-in-law, the Marquis de St. Florentin, has already placed its melancholy consequences before our eyes. Meanwhile their secret but unrelaxing enemy, the Jacobin Maximilien, failed not to improve the advantages afforded him by their steady adherence to the unpopular cause. Secure through the increasing ascen-

dancy of his faction, from the enmity of the lord of Navelles, he boldly revisited his birth-place, and openly harangued the people; and although he ventured not to proceed to any extremity of public violence, yet the firebrand carried by the human fox into the wide fields of the Duke's remote demesne, bequeathed sparks in its progress, which smouldered for a time, to burst into a desolating conflagration. Those who marked the sullen progress of the flames, dared not lay an assuaging hand on their violence; nay, even those who beheld their possessions thus ravaged before their eyes, were compelled to join in the triumphant pæans of the incendiary. Alas! already they anticipated a darker hour,—and more extended ruin!

CHAPTER XII.

We have seen the best of our time; machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves! Find out this villain;—it shall lose thee nothing;—do it carefully.

KING LEAR.

WHILE the immediate adherents of the house of Bourbon were thus involved in danger and dismay, Camille Valazy did not fail to follow with a vigilant and sympathizing eye, the deepening complexion of their destinies. He knew the woman he adored to be surrounded by perils of the most serious character; he saw her name held up to common observation in the calumnious pages of the "*Père Duchesne*," and "*Publiciste Parisien*;" and he was aware that many who had been brought forward in a similar manner, had been already sacrificed

to the blind vengeance of the people. Emiline was in danger—the companion of his infancy—the adored foster-child of his mother, was menaced by unprecedented trials; and having satisfied himself, that in so sacred a character she had a claim to every sacrifice in his power to offer, Valazy was not long in forming a determination to resign his views, his interests, his feelings, his principles, his very life, to her service. Such was the vow he had offered to his mother in her behalf—such was the oath which again, and fervently, he pledged to his own heart.

Fortunately for his intentions, it chanced, that the course of commercial business had already suffered a material check from the disorganization which now began to pervade every branch of public affairs; and Valazy found no great difficulty in exciting the alarms of his only surviving partner, respecting the critical position of their interests. He persuaded him, and not without sufficient justification, that the time was come for every prudent man to hold his capital at his immediate disposal; and that their wisest measure would be to realize

their property, at a considerable present loss, rather than leave it to be involved in the general wreck which the future, and at no great distance of time, must inevitably decree to the commercial interests of France. Old Dacquin was more inclined to bewail himself and his manufactory, than his native country, or her failing credit; he stormed, expostulated, swore, wept, threatened,—and ended by assenting to the views and proposals of his youthful partner. The liberality exercised by Camille, readily procured them purchasers desirous of competing for a business at present thriving with undiminished success; in less than a month, a bright succession of newly burnished golden letters superseded those of the firm of "Dacquin and Valazy;" while the *ci-devant* manufacturers became capitalists and gentlemen at large.

It was amid the confusion arising from these important arrangements, that Camille's anxiety of mind was aggravated by the receipt of a letter from Laporte, the steward of the Duc de Navelles, acquainting him with the factious violence which had manifested itself

among the peasantry of the estate submitted to his controul;—with the unhappy spirit of resistance to all constituted authority excited by the visit of his kinsman Maximilien;—and with the belief entertained by the family of his noble patron, that Grand Moulin was no longer a safe or satisfactory residence for one so notoriously attached to their rights and interests as his mother. He stated that, although Madelon had been treated by her nephew with the most scrupulous regard and deference, it had been evidently a main object of the Jacobin's inflammatory harangues to render his ejection from the farm tenanted by his fathers, an evidence of the most oppressive tyranny; and that in consequence of the influence commanded by his cunning eloquence, the good *Fermière* of Grand Moulin began to find herself, for the first time, an object of general jealousy and mistrust. All remembrance of her kindliness, her neighbourly friendship, her frank cordiality, had been obliterated in a moment by the plausibility of an orator, who contrived to connect his own imaginary wrongs with the grievances of that popular cause which he insidiously

affected to advocate; and Madelon, deeply wounded by the desertion of her familiar friends, and by the jealous sarcasms of envious neighbours, and above all, irritated past her patience by the disaffection which was now openly acknowledged towards the hereditary lord of the land, at length acceded to the earnest entreaties of her noble foster-child, and resigned the lease of Grand Moulin, home-vine-yard, bantams, yellow carnations, and all! She had not, however, at present complied with the supplementary request of the considerate Emiline, that she would now re-establish herself in her household. "Come!" she had written, "come and resume all your rights upon my grateful affection. I call you, my best and kindest Madelon, to an anxious home, and a troubled city; but we will weep together over the calamities of France, and teach my children what holy charities can bind together the lord and the vassal, whom the policy of our evil times is seeking to disunite."

It was in furtherance of Madame de St. Florentin's project for the removal of Madelon to Paris, that Laporte now requested the inter-

vention of her son. In the mean time, her own views and inclinations were set forth in the following epistle—being the third which his worthy parent had laboured to indite in his behalf, during the twenty-six years of his existence.

My Son!

"I am going to quit Grand Moulin!—So much the worse, Camille; for you passed a happy childhood there; and I had my hope that a tranquil old age would still find me settled at the farm. 'Tis a good air, that which blows from the *côte;* the vines seldom failed, the crops are the earliest in the lordship, and the *basse cour*, now it is paved and rebuilt, has not its equal in the province. The happy days of my wedded life were passed there, Camille; and your father died there, and your good uncle; but, *n'importe!* as I said at first, I am going to leave Grand Moulin.

And now, child, what shall become of your old mother? It is for *you* to decide. My good lady Emiline would have me live with her at Paris; but many causes forbid me to accept her generous offer. I am told by those

who have been eye-witnesses to the dangers by which she is surrounded, that for her life's sake she may not long abide in France; that she must emigrate;—*emigrate*? ay, that is the word which designates the flight of the Queen's friends. And supposing I should agree to encumber her journey with my helplessness, is it for *me* to leave France, to *emigrate*—since that is the court term for running away and leaving all who are dearest to us in the hands of their enemies—for *me*, who have a son I love, and who is an honour to his father's name?

"You are a gentleman now, my Camille; not of man's making, but of the Almighty's and your own; the station in which you were born was beneath your abilities and your goodness, although it was a match for mine; and Madelon knows better than to resume any post which, ranking her with hired servants, would seem to bring you back to the condition above which your own exertions have raised you. Were I alone in the world, I would toil till my last hour for my master's house; work for my foster-child—beg for her; but I have no right to degrade my excellent son in the person

of his mother. Say then, Camille, what shall become of me?

"Means I want not; frugality, and Heaven's favour have blessed my store with increase. But these are fearful times; the bread we eat cannot be called our own; and the strong arm of defence can scarcely keep its head. With you, Camille, I feel that my rest would be without fear, my food without bitterness; but how may this be? Will Mademoiselle Euphroisine, whose speech is so dainty and her fashioning so gay, bear with Madelon's kersey bodice, and village phrase? Will Camille himself endure to see me disgrace his board?—My son! it is for *you* to decide!"

These interesting communications served but to determine and hasten the execution of a project, with which Camille had from the first connected his retirement from mercantile life. An estate of some extent had been offered to him as an investiture for part of his floating capital; which, as its vicinity to the coast of the Pas de Calais, afforded facilities becoming daily more important to the obnoxious party, he resolved to make his own. It was situated

in a part of the country divided by small proprietors; and consequently free from the intemperate spirit of resistance animating the united peasantry of the extensive territories of the *ancienne noblesse;* and he felt that it would form his pride and pleasure to instal his mother as mistress of an estate so secure from the general disturbance; and her own to embellish and improve a spot, which might hereafter form a safe retreat for the objects dearest to her heart. He doubted not that while he made it the business of his life to watch in Paris over the destinies of Emiline and her little family, his mother could content herself by cultivating at Manoir the favourites of her new garden and poultry-yard, in the hope of one day offering their produce to favourites dearer still.

It is not to be doubted that Madelon accepted with rapture her share in the scheme—a scheme which threatened no disturbance to her ordinary mode of life. She was content that herself and the carnations should be transplanted together: and when, every preliminary adjusted, the son of whom she was so justly proud came to conduct her in person to his

new estate, the *ex-bonne, ex-fermière* bade a triumphant adieu to the apostate village of Navelles, with an air of magnanimous disdain equivalent to Coriolanus's "I banish *you!*"

Camille did not permit himself to linger longer at Manoir than the time requisite to establish his mother. He had persuaded her that it was a concession due to his position in the world, to become Madame Valazy previous to her inauguration; and to leave at Grand Moulin her village costume. On this latter point indeed, he found her less refractory than he had anticipated; for the disloyalty betrayed by her native province had pre-disposed her to throw off the badge which marked her as its own. Having forwarded with lavish liberality all her projects of improvement, and bequeathed her to the guardianship of Monsieur le Curé and the services of a huge block of mortality, a herdsman named Tonton, who, with his wife, had prevailed upon her to include them in her transplantation, Camille directed his way towards Paris; whence every latest report wore a more gloomy aspect than the preceding intelligence.

Satisfied that "*reculer pour mieux sauter*" was the line of policy through which alone he could insure his primary object—the guardianship of Emiline's safety, he resolved to assume from the first, a tone of character calculated to rank him in the moderate party of the revolutionists, and obtain for him those local distinctions which might avail in her behalf, when the influence commanded by rank, and station, and opulence, should have ceased to exist. He knew that through the agency of Maximilien, such authority would readily be placed at his disposal; but he had to overcome a powerful sensation of disgust before he could determine on seeking his cousin's presence; who had distinguished himself, during the two years which had elapsed since their parting, by his virulent persecution of the royal family, as well as by licentious personal excesses. He was now one of the most noted and popular members of the *Assemblée Constituante;* a leading orator of the Jacobin club; and a confirmed *roué* in the habits of his private life. Since his last inauspicious visit to Paris, Camille had entertained no communication with his kinsman, ex-

cept through their common notary,—on the occasion of superadding some units to the amount of a loan which the wasteful luxury of the rude advocate of Republican simplicity rendered highly acceptable.

It was the consciousness of this heavy obligation which somewhat damped the cordiality of Maximilien's welcome, and embarrassed his address to his country cousin. But Camille, suspicious of the meanness of his apprehensions, had no sooner assured him that he was inclined rather to increase than diminish the measure of his favours, when the disinterested representative of the dignity of the people altered his tone, expanded into the most friendly warmth, and proceeded to enlarge without reserve on the views of his party, and acquaint himself with those entertained by one whom he addressed as "our regenerated cousin of beams and treadles."

CHAPTER XIII.

Vois ce que nous étions,—et vois ce que nous sommes,
Le peuple aveugle et foible est né pour les grands hommes,
Pour admirer, pour croire, et pour obéir.
Viens régner avec nous, si tu crains de servir;—
Partage nos grandeurs, au lieu de t'y soustraire,—
Et las de l'imiter, fais trembler le vulgaire.

VOLTAIRE.

"AND so you are come at last, my tardy cousin, to join the standard of the well-disposed. Well!—you may thank your stars, or Jupiter, or whatever divinity replaces in your worship the obsolete saints of the Royalists' calendar, that you have so responsible a patron willing to make your merits known to the assembly, as Max Valazy. But you have yourself done the state some service, and they know it. Believe me I have not failed to show forth from

the outset, in its proper light, your bold attempt in the theatre at Versailles."

"Attempt?—my *attempt?*——"

"Yes—yes! although unsuccessful, it was not lost upon us;—it served me indeed for the text of an oration on heroism and intrepidity, delivered at a two-hours' breath to the club of our section."

"Can it be possible that so simple a circumstance should be thus magnified into mischief,—that a vertigo should be construed into a project of assassination?"

"I gave you due credit for the colouring you threw on the affair; but between friends, coz,—such squeamishness is absurd. Why I was myself followed by a spy of the police—by a *mouchard*,—for the three weeks ensuing, only on the strength of bearing the same name with so desperate a democrat as yourself!—Ha! ha! ha!—think, Camille, think of the blackness of a reputation which could be supposed to endanger *mine*."

"I rather imagine, on the contrary, that suspicion fell upon *me*, on that luckless occasion, only from being mistaken for yourself."

"Nay! coz,—do not rob yourself of your solitary laurel; a time may come for it to shoot out into a sheltering tree. I assure you that when some months had passed away without my hearing of your welfare, or whereabout, I fully expected to unearth you in one of the secret dungeons we ploughed up in the Bastille. I dug forth, myself, a skeleton from under a concealed staircase, on which the quick lime had but half done its work, and which, by Heavens! I thought had been your own;—the livid brow had all your imperial air of magnanimity."

"You jest on an awful subject, Maximilien."

"Nay! it was no jest to *me*, but a real right earnest disappointment, when I found the chapfallen hero to have lived as a more illustrious traitor than my cousin Camille; for I considered your unceremonious exit as a receipt in full for I dare not say how many thousands of francs."

"I am indebted to the warmth of your family affection."

"Why, looking on the business with a phi-

losophical eye, methinks I rather prefer your living carcase; I expect you will become an honour to the name of Valazy. When you have fleshed your maiden sword to the hilt in the body of one of the tyrant's minions—when you have quaffed inspiration from one of Danton's bold harangues—when you have acquired firmness as well as energy,—you may perhaps aspire to the distinction of becoming a popular leader. We want a new man to occupy the public eye; and one whose unsullied reputation may carry our theories home to the minds of the scrupulous;—the *fainéans*, whose prudish consciences adjudge the value of a creed from the demeanour of its priesthood."

"I am not ambitious of so illustrious an office as that of bleaching the stains of the Jacobin club; I am anxious to serve the cause of the million, and in a very humble capacity. My exertions have been for years past confined to the desk; have you interest and confidence in my capabilities to procure me a place as *Adjoint?*"

"Bailly is my most intimate friend,—I have

no hesitation in assuring you of his protection."

"In the mean time I am anxious to enrol myself in the National Guard, and devote my undivided services to the common weal."

"Aha!—a pure republican!—why you have outstripped me on my own course! Little did I expect to see so sublime an eminence attained by the *millionnaire* of Lyons!—by the stripling who was proud to stand for hours loading the fowling-pieces of the young Amédée de Navelles, and the insolent St. Florentin! By the way, I conclude you are aware that the Comte de Navelles is included in the decree against emigration;—his long sojourn in Italy can be considered in no other light than the feint of an emigrant. I must, therefore, content myself, when the day of retribution arrives,—and its glorious dawn already glows in the sky,—with the head of his old doting father; or with the *hand*,—the withered right hand, whose accursed weight once struck me to the earth. By the God of vengeance!" exclaimed Maximilien, his lips quivering with rage, "I

will hang it up in my cabinet as a trophy of triumph for my children's children !"

" You teach me to augur ill of a cause whose impulses are gathered from the private passions of its leaders."

" Out on the tepid ideot who could gloze away his sense of injury to seal up the eyes of his proselyte ! Hear it,—Camille Valazy, my father's brother's son—if you have been hitherto ignorant of the fact—hear it—know it—believe it ! 'Tis a private passion *alone* that motives the ardour with which I strive to pull down the rotten edifice of the aristocracy, toppling even to peril above our heads ! It is the lust of *vengeance* which animates my voice in the rostrum,—which condenses my counsel in the assembly !—I have borne a blow, imprisonment, degradation.—To satiate the malicious grudge of an oppressor,—to extinguish the idle intemperance of boyhood,—I was torn like a malefactor from my family,—denied the light and the breath of Heaven,—the exercise of my free limbs,—the emotion of my free heart. Condemned for recreation to count the slimy tracks left by the wandering reptiles on my prison

wall, I sanctified my nightly sleep, not by a drivelling prayer, but by a reiterated oath, such as the demons might register in their archives."

"An oath!—and to what end?"

"Pardon me, the time for perfect confidence is not yet come; I must know the temper of a weapon, ere I gird it on my thigh, and entrust it with the safe keeping of my life. But I see the recital of my wrongs has moved you; nor have I forgotten that 'twas to your bold exertions I owed my liberation; although *you*, Coz, have since been tempted to overlook the tyranny which hunted us, at the price of the concession, from the lands of Navelles."

"I could easily forgive an infliction I was conscious of having earned. While I admit your wrongs to the full limit, I feel that my mother's obligations should have taught me a more respectful mode of resistance to the Duke."

"Respectful!—and to a dotard whose vulgar clay was only animated into action by the heat of his obstinate arrogance!—Well! well! an hour will come, when I shall grind that clay into dust!—and when his precious nephew, St.

Florentin, shall have humbly, and unsuccessfully sued for my patronage as a shoeblack, I will save from starvation his mincing dame,—who affects to shudder whenever she espies me at any public meeting,—by promoting her to the rank of my first sultana,—if indeed the post be vacant."

A thousand lightnings flashed from the eyes of Camille, and his clenched hand was involuntarily raised as the ruffian uttered this insulting menace; but he retained sufficient self-possession to detect, through the satanic smile which lightened Maximilien's keen fixedness of observation, that he was baited as a trial of temper,—put upon the anvil in proof of his real views and feelings. Satisfied of the necessity of disguising from Maximilien the secret intentions of his mind, he restrained his boiling indignation,—hurried through a scarcely audible excuse for his abrupt departure,—spoke of a remembered engagement,—and was in the street gasping for breath, before he had been able to note the effect of his agitation on his wary kinsman.

As he paced onwards with impetuous steps,

the laughter of fiends seemed to ring in his ears; mingled with the names of the victims they had pre-doomed to ruin.

"I will save them!" said he between his compressed lips,—"I will save them, let my life, my fame, my honour, be the forfeiture of their escape. Heaven be thanked, I had the precaution to evade the snare so cunningly spread by yonder villain; and the courage to blind his perception of my devotion to the family he loads with execration. Another minute in his presence would have effectually betrayed me."

Poor Camille! Unskilled in the arts of society's tacticians, he knew not it was to his first involuntary impulse, his *premier mouvement*, that Maximilien's observation had been directed; and that his fervent attachment to the St. Florentins, — to Emiline, — had been as distinctly revealed, as by the most deliberate avowal.

His precipitate flight was hailed by Maximilien Valazy with a burst of triumphant laughter.

"On my soul!" said he, "my cousin Camille

does not vary his bill of fare to suit the passing season; for my own part, I cannot fit my appetite to such stale monotony. *Pour moi, toujours perdrix ne vaut rien!*"

CHAPTER XIII.

Dorante. C'est un bon bourgeois assez ridicule, comme vous voyez, dans toutes ses manières ; mais galant homme tout à fait.

Dorimène. Il n'est pas malaisé de s'en apercevoir.

MOLIERE.

To calm the perturbation of his mind by casting oil upon the troubled waves, Camille directed his wandering steps towards the house of old Delplanque ; who well deserved the acknowledgment of a visit, although his officious absurdity had in a great measure neutralized the kindness of the attentions he had devoted to Camille, during the illness which terminated his former sojourn in Paris.

His name, however, no longer blazed in Gothic capitals over the door of the most sumptuous *magasin* of the Rue St. Honoré ; another mercer was *breveté* in his stead. Curiosity,

mingled with some degree of interest, prompted Camille to enter the shop, and inquire touching the removal and welfare of its former proprietor, *and of his daughter;* for as he ascended the steps, his mind involuntarily and anxiously recurred to the declarations of Delplanque to Madame de St. Florentin, of the state of Euphroisine's affections.

Neither the father nor the daughter, however, justified his apprehensions;—both were alive and flourishing; having changed their abiding place, not for the church-yard of the Innocents, but for a comfortable mansion,—*entre cour et jardin*, as the advertisements have it,—and situated in the Quartier du Marais. Awe-struck by the fate of Réveillon, the paper-maker of the Faubourg St. Antoine, who had been butchered during a wanton attack made by the insurgents on his rich premises, the mercer by appointment had emulated the wisdom of Camille, realized his capital, and retired to such *otium cum* such *dignitate*, as the subordinate honours of the unfashionable neighbourhood he had selected for his residence could bestow.

Valazy did not hesitate to push his voyage of discovery towards those unknown regions which the old man was fond of designating as his modest retirement; and detected on his arrival as complete an alteration in his appearance as in his *locale*. The grey hairs which used to be scrupulously powdered, and rolled in buckle round his important face, now drooped like useless streamers from a shattered wreck; his suit of *brun de financier* was exchanged for a *douillette* of grey camlet; and his ivory measure for a watering-pot. Valazy found him diligently occupied in placing labelled sticks to the tulips in his garden;—it reminded him, he said, of affixing the tickets to his merceries; but he gratefully renounced his employment, and welcomed any interruption promising him a listener.

"My excellent young friend—my dear Valazy," said the old gentleman, conducting him to his coziest arm-chair, and anticipating a gossip of at least three hours' duration, "this visit is indeed a flattering proof of your remembrance. Euphroisine! Euphroisine! appear, my lovely girl; here is our much-esteemed

friend from Lyons, who so often forms the subject of our conversations. My daughter not at home?—So much the better—so much the better; we shall have time for an uninterrupted discussion. Ah! Monsieur Valazy, my good young man, times are sadly altered with us!"

"I can scarcely consider them so, my dear Sir," replied Camille, well aware that the despondency of his host applied itself solely to his individual plight, "since I find you so comfortably settled."

"Why this house is, as you wisely observe, tolerably distributed, and not ill decorated You had always a taste, Monsieur Valazy, although the advantage of an *entrée* at court, like mine, had not refined it to the highest pitch of purity—"

"Like yours!—True, Sir! but it enables me to do justice to the elegance of your domestic arrangements," replied Camille, glancing towards the chairs and sofas, from which the cotton covers were never withdrawn, except for the high solemnity of the weekly *Boston*, which served to assemble the peaceable inhabitants of the Marais, in Delplanque's unpara-

goned saloon; rescuing his chandelier from its canvas bag, and his mirrors from their tantalizing veil of gauze. The admiring guest was tempted to attribute the orderly array and studied neatness of the little apartment to the industry of Mademoiselle Euphroisine; but honesty, or jealousy, instigated the precise old gentleman to appropriate the compliment. The household order visible in his establishment, he said, was the fruit of his own labours, or rather, was "*l'expression de son oisiveté*," for, as he had already observed, times were sadly altered with him.

Altered, and abundantly, they certainly were. Instead of beguiling his mornings in the pompous display of the silken glories of his counter, to the fairest and noblest of the Parisian beauties, feeding their folly with the genial nutriment of flattery, and tempting them into wasteful profusion—a task for which he believed himself eminently qualified by his intuitive high-breeding, and intimate version of the etiquette of the court,—instead of lounging for hours in an ante-chamber at Versailles, gathering the whispers of fashionable scandal, which

he afterwards mysteriously unfolded over his *café à la crême* to his friend and gossip of the Rue St. Honoré, the wife of an opposite perfumer, he was now reduced to the comparative dulness and obscurity of his own independent home, his small mansion, and contracted garden; and the silver-mounted ivory measure with which he had been wont to count brocaded ells to a lady in waiting, now served to determine the sickly progress of a straggling Cobœa plant, which he was striving to coax into verdure upon a glaring white boundary wall.

"Yes, my dear friend!" pathetically observed Delplanque, as he led Camille through his miniature garden to a tawdry Chinese alcove, which he qualified, in a Rousseau phrase, as "the cherished refuge of his humble leisure,"—"I have, as you perceive, wholly renounced the great world; I have taken shelter under the safeguard of a peaceable mediocrity. These are no times for the exhibition and enjoyment of commercial luxury, as my unhappy friend Réveillon learnt at the cost of his existence; and when the spirit of republican inso-

lence began to brave me across my own mahogany counter, I resolved to escape with honour from an unequal warfare,—to retire, Monsieur Valazy, with dignity. Yes!" he continued, lowering his voice into a tone mysteriously confidential, "it is a degrading fact that the mistress of your vile kinsman—she who is now *femme-de-chambre* to Madame de St. Florentin—was deeper in my books in the space of one month, than the whole united Faubourg St. Germain!"

"How!" exclaimed Camille, remorselessly interrupting Delplanque's course of argument; "How say you! Flavie a confidential servant to Madame de St. Florentin?—Impossible!"

"Nothing is more sure. My successor, who occasionally visits me in my rural retreat—my Satin farm, as I call it—to remit a dividend of his purchase-money, and—between ourselves—to try and convert the residue to his own account, in the shape of my Euphroisine's dowry," added the ex-mercer, distorting his meagre visage into an attempt at a knowing look, "my successor, Sir, informs me that the little grisette, having exhausted Maximilien Valazy's

available resources by her boundless extravagance, and having been replaced in his affections by some opera dancer, was reduced to the necessity of entering into service. Her father being a tenant of the Duc de Navelles, she contrived to interest the kind and credulous Marchioness in her favour, and impose herself, with the aid of false certificates, upon her acceptance, as an accomplished waiting woman."

"But her appearance—her effrontery."

"Let so accomplished an actress alone! Attired in a *robe à l'enfant*, or a *bavolette à la villageoise*, the part of a country girl becomes as easy as any other."

"But yourself, Monsieur Delplanque! how can you have permitted a being so pure as the Marchioness de St. Florentin, to be polluted by the touch of that abandoned woman?"

"Calm yourself, my good Sir!—Monsieur Delplanque has his own safety, and that of his daughter to care for, without running a tilt in the cause of every gentle dame wearing satin from his measure. 'Tis a serious matter to interfere in the designs of the patriotic party; and my Euphroisine, who has tact and dis-

cernment which mark her as the daughter of no ordinary parents, is persuaded that some uncommon inducement must have wrought upon a being so selfish and arrogant as Mademoiselle Flavie, to undertake a menial post; and that her servitude only serves to mask the office of a domestic spy. It is more than probable that Maximilien Valazy has gathered valuable intelligence of the projects entertained at the Tuileries, at the hands of his *ci-devant* mistress."

"And *you*—you who affect a grateful devotion to the house of Bourbon, have connived at this infamous imposture?"

"Mademoiselle Delplanque, contrary to my express commands, thought fit to apprize the Marchioness both of the fact, and of her own suspicions; but as to your inference,—my loyalty, Sir," continued the old gentleman, theatrically striking his breast, "my loyalty is, thank God! pure beyond impeachment. Know, Sir, that the suspicion of Jacobinism, which I incurred on the occasion of your unlucky vagary in the Royal Theatre, brought on my unsuspecting innocence the whole horde

of patriots, in the hope that through the cession of my books of credit, they should cajole me into furnishing a popular accusation against her Majesty's personal extravagance.—And what was my alternative, Sir, in this trying exigency? —How did I escape the snare?—By burning my books into ashes, Monsieur Valazy, like the sybil of old. Yes! Sir, I destroyed them, although forming my sole bond of security for a debt of twenty thousand franks;—I destroyed them with the magnanimity of an ancient Roman!"

Exhausted by his own eloquence, Delplanque had no leisure to comment on the fit of abstraction into which his guest had fallen during his tirade; and the entrance of Mademoiselle Euphroisine opportunely afforded a new turn to the conversation. Although Camille had regarded her, during the short period of their former acquaintance, with the most unobservant indifference, the sentiments which her father had persisted in ascribing to her, in his favour, had exerted that influence over his feelings which might be expected from the vanity of human nature. His heart beat quicker as she

approached;—and imperfectly as he was versed in the catalogue of her external perfections, he was struck with equal surprise and regret on perceiving the alteration effected by two short years upon her person. The joyous smile of youth, and the flush of health, had disappeared from her countenance; and although they had left its noble outline still more prominently apparent, the beauty by which she was now distinguished was of a grave and lofty character, and wholly unadapted to the expression of that melting tenderness, which, in spite of his better reason, Camille Valazy had prepared himself to trace in her demeanour.

Delplanque interrupted the complimentary ceremonial of their meeting, by vociferous lamentations over the tenacity with which his daughter allowed herself to cling to her early associations.

"She cannot resolve, Monsieur Valazy, to abandon the Faubourg St. Honoré; she cannot exert her father's philosophy of mind, his superiority to the chains of habit; and acquire the unambitious humility of a *bourgeoise du Marais.*"

"Mademoiselle is probably aware how earnestly her presence is still coveted in her former home;" replied Camille, with an affectation of compliment, which was greeted by a most contemptuous glance on the part of Euphroisine.

"No!" said Delplanque, unconscious that the assertion had already been silently but eloquently refuted, "No! my daughter foolishly disdains all intercourse with my worthy successor; who by the way, after all, is a mere *parvenu* in commercial life.'"

"Good!" thought Valazy; "there exists then an '*ancienne noblesse du comptoir!*'"

"It is to a more noble quarter that the visits of Euphroisine are addressed. Tell me, child—*m'amie—ma poule—ma cocotte!*—tell me—have you not passed the morning with Mademoiselle Bertin?"

"I have, Sir."

"Mademoiselle Bertin—*modiste brevetée de la Reine?*" inquired Camille, repressing a smile.

"A most faithful and devoted servant of her Majesty," replied Mademoiselle Delplanque, in

a voice whose firmness repelled all renewal of ridicule on the part of Valazy.

"Ah! I knew it—I knew it," exclaimed her father. "You are to understand, Valazy, that this poor girl's affectionate heart is as fervently devoted to the royal cause, as if the blood of a Polignac flowed in her veins. Her mother, Sir, had the honour of being attached to the service of the late Dauphine, mother to our unhappy sovereign; and through this connexion I have been favoured by the unintermitting patronage of the court of France. Euphroisine, while still a child, attracted the notice of our gracious Marie Antoinette, then hopeless of becoming herself a mother; and the magic smiles and endearing affability of the Queen,—which could as surely raise an army, as did her Imperial parent's intrepidity among her Hungarian states of old,—have converted my poor girl into a warm partizan of the royal cause. Now from Mademoiselle Bertin she has the melancholy satisfaction of learning every particular connected with the altered destinies of her mistress; and Euphroisine passes her days in ac-

quainting herself with the afflictions of the Queen, and her nights in weeping over them."

Euphroisine rose from her seat, and began to busy herself with the porcelain on the chimney-piece, in order to escape the look of interest and approval with which she was now regarded by Valazy.

"But," continued the wily mercer, re-awakened by these symptoms, to all his former designs upon Camille, "I fear all this is not likely, Monsieur Valazy, to cement a friendship between you and my daughter: you have a family inclination, as I am but too well aware, towards the popular cause."

"Nay!" replied Camille, smiling, "my politics will no longer prove a motive of disunion between Mademoiselle Delplanque and myself. The time is past when Maximilien Valazy claimed even the influence of an elder kinsman over my bosom. I have long renounced my trust in him, and in his patriotism."

"Bravo! this is the best of good news."

"A spirit of cruelty and evil has lately manifested itself which obviously arises from a deeper source than the degradation or op-

pression of the populace; and which satisfies me that the people of France are not at present to be trusted with the unsheathed sword of liberty; for it is a weapon which fools and children wield to their own destruction. Of two evils, I prefer the tyranny of a despotic monarch, even guided or misguided by a profuse and irresolute ministry, to that of the many-headed monster—the plebeian million—the self-constituted rulers, who boast neither the qualifications of education, disinterestedness, nor responsibility, requisite to render their yoke a safe or easy burthen."

" N'est on jamais tyran qu'avec un diadême?

is the apostrophe of their own favourite author," observed Euphroisine half apart.

" This is a profession of political faith I little expected from one of the name of Valazy. May I trust that *my* opinions have in some small degree influenced the amelioration of your own?" said the mercer, smiling.

" It is the mischiefs revealed by the present triumph of the Jacobin party, Monsieur Delplanque, by which my opinions have been modified."

"You have surely engaged Monsieur Camille to partake of our family dinner?" inquired Euphroisine of her father, with an earnestness, upon the strength of which an invitation was immediately given, and as promptly accepted; and Delplanque, who, in the absence of more active employments, presided over the domestic arrangements of his household, now departed to issue his mandates to the heads of the various departments submitted to his superintendence. His zeal was not altogether gratuitous in the present instance; for he had the satisfaction of leaving his guest and his daughter *tête-à-tête.*

CHAPTER XIV.

D'où tenez vous, dans ce séjour obscur
Un ton si noble—un langage si pur ?
Partout on a de l'esprit ; c'est l'ouvrage
De la nature, et, c'est votre partage :
Mais l'esprit seul, sans éducation
N'a jamais eu ni ce tour, ni ce ton.

VOLTAIRE.

As soon as he had left the room, Euphroisine, taking some work into her hands, seated herself at the table immediately opposite Camille; and with an air of calmness and self-decision, very different from that she had hitherto worn in his presence, entered into conversation on some subject of general interest; but scarcely had she uttered a few words, when, covering her face with her hands, she suddenly burst into tears.

"Do not mistake this emotion, Monsieur

Valazy, for an effusion of idle sentiment," said she, at length by an anxious effort recovering her composure. "I came home agitated and harassed by some public intelligence of an afflicting nature which I had just received; and the surprise occasioned by your sudden and most unexpected declaration of loyalty, and the joy with which I know it will be welcomed by more than one of my illustrious friends, overcame my firmness. Did you but know—could you but imagine the straits to which they have been reduced for want of confidential agents, you might better judge the value they affix to the acquisition of an honest heart and ready hand. In these times of irresolution and tergiversation, it is difficult to know our friends from our enemies; but the candour, the manliness of your declaration to my father, assures me that the Marquise de St. Florentin was not mistaken in her high reliance upon your loyalty and worthiness of trust."

"Madame de St. Florentin!"

"My father has made you acquainted with the fervour of my sympathy in the royal cause;

but he has not told you all;—he is old and timid, incapable of active agency,—nay, even of active self-defence. I have therefore judged it neither necessary nor prudent to implicate him in a cause which has already proved fatal to many of its adherents. My own safety I feel justified in perilling at my own will; and your recent professions induce me to confess that it is eternally bound up in the fortunes of the royal family."

"To a degree, no doubt, far beyond that assigned by Monsieur Delplanque?"

"Ay, even unto life and death!—But before I entrust myself more explicitly to your honour, grant me one word of assurance, that Madame de St. Florentin's pledge was not rashly given; and that you will guard in holiest secrecy all I am about to commit to your keeping."

"You require a blind vow, Mademoiselle;—yet demanded in a name so precious to my heart,—to my *gratitude*,—I shall nevertheless freely concede my promise. There is my hand," said Camille bluntly, "and I swear upon it inviolable secrecy and exclusive devotion to the—*cause*."

Euphroisine modestly, but wholly without affectation, placed her own in that of Valazy.

" I accept the compact; and be it prospered by the guardianship of Heaven!" said she, reassuming the seat from which she had half arisen.

Camille still looked towards her for explanation: " You will not be surprised, Monsieur Valazy," she resumed, " that my deep, my unqualified devotion to the suffering House of Bourbon at this cruel juncture, should have secured me the confidence of many, or most of its female adherents. Among the most distinguished of these, the Marquise de St. Florentin honours me with her especial favour; and the fidelity with which I reverence, and love, and devote myself to her service, arise no less from her involvement in the interests of our unhappy mistress, than from the attractive qualities of her own disposition. It is scarcely a week since--but pardon me—to render myself intelligible, I should acquaint you that the visits so lamented by my father, are *not* addressed to the abode of Mademoiselle Bertin, but to the château of the Tuileries itself;—it is

scarcely a week ago, that I heard you recommended, in the most urgent terms, to her Majesty, by Madame de St. Florentin."

"To the Queen—and by Emiline?"

"A trusty messenger was required, to become the bearer of a despatch to the Emperor; he became incapacitated by illness; and, among all her servants—among all those who had been raised, and enriched, and rendered graceless by her benefits—there was not one to whom Marie Antoinette could confide an affair of so much delicacy. She appealed to Madame la Marquise for aid and counsel: she demanded whether there existed no one over whom she was conscious of possessing unlimited influence;—one——"

"She named me!—say that she deigned to name her foster-brother—that she remembered Camille only as the most humble, the most devoted of her slaves!" exclaimed Valazy, rising and approaching the astonished Euphroisine with an air of wild animation.

A vivid crimson overspread her fair face; and as it died away, still left an intense streak on her previously pale cheeks. "Be satis-

fied!—she *did* name her foster-brother, and with the fondest reliance on his excellence—his loyalty. But scarcely had she uttered the name of Valazy, when every voice was raised against her rashness. Of the ladies of the court present at the discussion, two persisted in confounding you with your traitor cousin; and the third vehemently recalled you to the remembrance of her Majesty, as the spectator whose indecorous deportment in the Theatre at Trianon excited for a time so much anxiety. I was then on my knees before the Queen, occupied in the adjustment of her robe—for it is in the capacity of Bertin's favourite apprentice alone, that I am admitted to the happiness of waiting on my illustrious patroness—and Madame de St. Florentin, who was aware that my father conducted you to Versailles on the evening in question, deigned to appeal to my testimony in your behalf."

"And you gave it, Mademoiselle?—"

"Unhesitatingly, as regarded your innocence in that particular; but conscious of so slight an acquaintance with your principles and character, you will acknowledge that it would

have been a vain presumption on my part, to confirm the Marchioness's declarations of your unqualified loyalty to the House of Bourbon."

"I was therefore suffered to share the ignominy of my Jacobin kinsman?"

"Fortunately another courier was selected for the service of the day. But I overheard the Queen whispering to Madame de St. Florentin when they parted, 'You must find me this Camille of yours; for I am more than inclined to trust to your recommendation. I am persuaded that the services of my Emiline's foster-brother would not be withheld from his Queen in the time of trouble. I pray you sound his views and principles, and if you discover them to be such as we could wish, let me hear more of him."

"And wherefore has not Madame la Marquise deigned to comply with her Majesty's directions?"

"By her express commands, I addressed a letter to you on that same day, imploring your presence at Paris. My letter, Monsieur Valazy, was returned unopened."

"I must have quitted Lyons previous to the honour of your communication."

"Madame has subsequently prosecuted her inquiries through another channel. Since the evil spirit of the times, spreading its pestilent infection through the interposition of your kinsman, manifested itself on the estates of the Duc de Navelles—his confidential steward —Laporte, I think, by name—has been received into the establishment of the Marchioness, as a happy shelter for his old age. From him, the St. Florentin family learned with regret that you had removed your mother from Grand Moulin, without yielding the smallest clue to your future residence or future plans; and this abrupt measure they naturally regarded as an act of personal unkindness."

"Yet it was urged only by the most anxious regard for themselves—for their own ultimate safety."

"I must leave you to exculpate yourself on this occasion to the Marchioness. This very morning I have been engaged in giving an account of my execution of a commission, with which I had the honour of being charged by Ma-

dame Thibaut, I was leaving the Château, when Madame la Marquise, whom I passed in the ante-room, detained me to observe, 'I fear, Mademoiselle, I was rash in the pledge I ventured to offer her Majesty for the dutiful services of Camille Valazy. I can obtain no trace of my poor Madelon;—can *you*, Euphroisine, afford me no clue to her retreat?' I assured her that since your last visit to Paris, I had scarcely even heard you named; but Madame—I know not why—smiled incredulously as she patted me on the cheek. 'I will not despair,' she said. 'I will still trust to recover my good brother through your agency.' Ah! how little, how very little, when I entered this house on my return, did I expect so immediate a fulfilment of her expectations."

"Yet your manner of address—pardon me, Mademoiselle—evinced little pleasure in the recognition."

"Nay!" replied Euphroisine, smiling for the first time since their interview, "recollect that I had no reason to share Madame de St. Florentin's partial interpretation of your views and proceedings."

"I am at least grateful that you have amended your judgment; and have now only to implore that you will lose no time in satisfying the Marquise de St. Florentin of my absolute, my sacred devotion to the cause she advocates. You have vouchsafed to give me your hand, Mademoiselle, as the pledge of a loyal heart:—assure yourself that with mine, you have received my vows of homage and allegiance to the royal cause; and that such aid and exertions as may be required in its name, shall never be reluctantly granted by Camille Valazy."

The treaty thus cavalierly proposed, was scarcely ratified by the prompt acceptance of the delighted Euphroisine, when the re-entrance of old Delplanque, pinked and powdered, and re-installed in the *habit brun de financier*, put an end to all confidential discussion between the parties. With good-humoured chiding, he despatched his daughter to her toilet, preparatory to the announcement of dinner; while a knowing smile affected to betray his participation in the state of affairs between her and his evidently agitated guest.

The disordered attire and dishevelled tresses

of Euphroisine manifested, on her return, how moderately she shared either the coquetry of her sex, or the designs of her father. Throughout the meal, she remained silent, pre-occupied, and mournful; and when, on her father's proposing the health and restoration to happiness of Louis and his family, Camille Valazy warmly accepted the pledge, and hallowed its meaning by a profound obeisance towards herself, the agitated girl was fairly driven from the table by the struggle of her emotions.

She re-appeared only to bid Camille farewell at the moment of departure. "I will meet you to-morrow at eleven," she whispered, "on the Boulevard de la Reine." And her tone was so distinct from that of levity or sentiment, that even the vainest of men could not have misinterpreted the character of her communication.

"This is indeed a season calculated to mature the growth of heroism," thought Camille, as he slowly returned towards his lodgings; "nor can I reasonably wonder that women and girls assume the energy of manhood, when men acquire the qualities of beasts of prey. I will take, at least, no step till I have received further

counsel from this devoted adherent to the falling cause of royalism; or further insight into the views of those who are still dearer to my heart."

The young provincial, in traversing the most frequented quarter of the metropolis, was astonished to perceive how little its external surface demonstrated the commotions secretly stirring within its dark recesses. Elegant equipages, smiling faces, rich repositories of art and fashion,—announcements of public diversions, of mountebank feats, and theatrical representations—still greeted him, as of old, in every crowded street. There was not a careful countenance, or a gloomy object, to be detected in that city, wherein projects of death and desolation were hourly devised and perpetrated; and wherein the descendants of two ancient houses of royalty were condemned to unremitting endurance of the most grievous humiliations.

The members of the National Assembly were eagerly pouring forth from their *séance* as Valazy pursued his way across the Place de Louis XV.; and amid their noisy disorder, he discerned a group formed chiefly of the friends

and associates of his cousin Maximilien; but too deeply engaged in their own vociferous argumentations to observe his vicinity. "Alas! that their predictions should have been so speedily verified!" was his own melancholy apostrophe, as he gazed upon the precincts of the degraded palace of the Tuileries, (now occupied by the National Guard;) and reflected on the altered destinies of the royal family—its tenants on compulsion. Depressed and perplexed in his mind, he took refuge from such afflicting contemplations in his own obscure lodging; and the only agreeable impression which haunted his mind on retiring to his pillow, was of the part taken by Madame de St. Florentin in his defence.

CHAPTER XV.

If they who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck before thy presence bend,
'Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that insures respect;
But she is something more than queen,
Who is beloved where never seen.

COWPER.

THE following morning, Valazy failed not to keep time and place in his appointment with Euphroisine; and scarcely had he begun to thread the jostling groups of the crowded Boulevard, when he perceived her coming slowly towards him,—but without a veil, or any attempt at disguise.

"If the eyes of an enemy should be upon us," observed Euphroisine, unhesitatingly accepting his arm, "this meeting will be attri-

buted to motives of gallantry—our best preservative against other, and more important suspicions. And while I know your affections to be devoted, however sinfully, to another,—pardon me, Monsieur Valazy, that I have penetrated your secret—and my own to be exclusively engrossed by those whose present sorrows form the disgrace of my native land, no inconvenience can accrue to either from such a misconstruction.—And what are name and fame, when balanced against a sense of duty?—Banishing, therefore, every feeling of embarrassment arising from our sex and age, I hail you henceforward as the brother of my hopes."

There were many things in this speech which jarred against the prejudices and the self-love of Camille. He was inclined to resent the peremptory decision of tone with which his young companion alluded to that secret of his heart, which he was disposed to guard with becoming susceptibility; and he felt piqued at the air of superiority with which she assigned the boundaries of their own relative positions. There was something, however, so mournfully

grave, so free from all petulance in her manner, that an avowal of displeasure would have rendered him ridiculous.

"I accept," said he, after a short pause, "I cordially accept the trust you are willing to repose in me. You do me honour in believing, on such slight grounds, that my views and feelings are honest as your own; and, as your own, fervently devoted to those whom a long line of sovereigns has bequeathed to our loyalty and affection.—You do me honour by your trust;—and may God desert me when I fail to deserve it!"

Camille thought he could discern that the steps of his companion trod with a lighter buoyancy as he uttered these words; and as she had now insensibly directed their course towards the very outskirts of the throng, he was about to profit by this moment of seclusion, and enter into a detail of the projects that had brought him to Paris, when Euphroisine, apparently unconscious of his intention, resumed her former tone of dictation.

"The dove, Monsieur Valazy, need not disdain to gather wisdom from the serpent;—to es-

cape the snare and the pitfall, craft must match with craft, and the movements of our warfare keep pace and quality with those of the enemy."

"Mademoiselle speaks in terms of an able tactician."

"Mademoiselle speaks in humble scholarship to those who, from the importance of their stake, must needs have acquainted themselves with every turn of the game. But I lose time in circumlocution;—I came not hither to dissert,—but to acquaint you with your appointed duty."

"Leaving, I conclude, to myself," interrupted Camille with some degree of irritation, "the liberty of action."

"Nay! *that* you have already remitted, in your vow of allegiance to your Queen and to her cause."

"Indeed!—I was hardly conscious——"

"Pardon me;—you may perhaps spare your resistance by listening to the detail of that line of duty which I have been instructed to impose upon you. My father, I find, acquainted you yesterday with the advantages derived by your cousin and his party from the confidential post allotted to one of their creatures,—an unfortu-

nate girl named Flavie,—in the family of the Marquis de St. Florentin. 'Better a friend in the enemy's camp,' says the proverb, 'than two at home.'"

"I surely miscomprehend you," exclaimed Camille, raising his voice to a pitch of indiscreet indignation. "I surely mistake your intention, in believing that you would assign to me,—*to me*,—the part of a spy—of an eaves' dropping traitor——"

"Let me beg that you will not vent your heroism quite so loudly. I am simply instructed, but *not* by the Marquise de St. Florentin, to request that you will immediately cause yourself to be enrolled in the National Guard. Your cousin's recognizance will readily obtain you the notice of Lafayette; and thus by attaining the right of occasional access to the palace, you will supply a medium of unsuspected communication between their Majesties and those friends whose safety might be compromised by overt intercourse."

"Unconscious as I am, at present, of the duties undertaken and the oaths required in the act of enrolment, it is impossible to comply with

your somewhat imperious request. My own immediate views entirely coincide with the measure you propose; but I have yet to learn whether a soldier of the National Guard can honourably become an emissary of——"

"His anointed king?—You must understand that fatal watchword *La Nation* rather in its factious than in its reasonable sense, if you suppose its authority can supersede that of its lawful sovereign,— of your own!—Your scruple, however, is an honourable weakness, although one which better reflection cannot fail to disarm."

"Heaven mend the times!" thought Camille, as he walked on for some minutes in silent perplexity; "for all the brains in the land seem set a gadding!—some demon, weary of organizing the cabals of his Pandemonium, has infected every spirit in Paris with this mania for ascendency and intrigue. Yesterday, Maximilien,—my fellow and equal in rustic insignificance,—talks to me as though his brutal foot were already upon the neck of his king;—to-day, a girl,—a mercer's daughter,—a child in experience of the world,—assumes the tone of a

chancellor,—a minister of state,—a regal ambassador,—affecting to regulate *my* conscience and her Majesty's councils! Plague on the presumption of both!——"

"I might perhaps startle you into inconsiderate acquiescence," resumed Euphroisine in a tranquil tone, "by claiming it through the influence and in the name of the Marchioness de St. Florentin; but every womanly feeling rises against such an abuse of my sex's prerogative. I should scorn to win through the ascendency of a lawless and unsanctioned passion, those concessions which you withhold from a young, a beautiful, an innocent queen;—from a wife and mother of the royal House of Bourbon,—now, alas!—most injured and most unhappy!"

"I withhold nothing," exclaimed Camille, "except the blind sacrifice of my right of option. I have already sworn my allegiance to the royal cause—to myself—to God!—I now repeat it to *you*, Mademoiselle Euphroisine; and I pray you to become the interpreter of my good intentions, in the quarter whence they have been commanded."

"The Marchioness de St. Florentin is for the present occupied in conducting the infirm Duke her father, from his disturbed estate at Navelles to a château possessed by the Marquis in the vicinity of Meaux; and it is her intention to prolong her visit to the utmost, in order to dissuade him by her presence from intermingling in scenes and measures, pursued in the capital by those to whom his age and infirmities would afford an unfair advantage. A circumstance, however, of the greatest moment—one which at present I have no commands to entrust to your knowledge,—will shortly require the presence of Madame la Marquise at Paris; when you will have an opportunity of framing your own vindication, and receiving your credential, from herself:—at present she remains ignorant of your arrival in Paris."

Camille fancied that his companion was trying to obtain a view of his countenance while she vouchsafed this explanation; and, determined to mark his indifference to her scrutiny, he turned calmly towards her, thereby acquiring the further certitude that a tinge of scorn tempered the expression of her curiosity.

"I shall have the honour, then, of being admitted to an interview with the playmate of my childhood—my mother's honoured and honourable charge?" he observed, attempting to characterize the nature of his devotion to Emiline.

A smile of deeper disdain evinced Euphroisine's detection of the subterfuge. "In the mean time," she replied, with marked emphasis, "since you have so lofty a superiority to dissembling, even in a good cause, suffer me to forewarn you that you will find at the Hotel St. Florentin a personal enemy—a subtle and an observant one."

"Your allusion to Mademoiselle Flavie authorizes me to inquire how, and wherefore, you have permitted a virtuous woman, of whom you speak with veneration and regard, to retain in her service a being so degraded as the paramour of Maximilien Valazy?"

"Madame de St. Florentin is now well aware of the character of her attendant. My intelligence unfortunately came too late; and it would be madness to draw down just now the malicious vengeance of an infuriated Jacobin,

by a hasty dismissal of his envoy. Besides, material advantages have been already obtained at the chateau, by putting this spy of *la nation* on a wrong scent. We must trust to your address to escape a similar snare, when you do us the service of obtaining secret information from your trusty kinsman."

"Pardon me; again you misinterpret my intentions, or would affix a false limit to the duties I have undertaken. No consideration would induce me to provoke a confidence of which I premeditated the betrayal. It is only the intelligence which comes accidentally to my knowledge, I shall feel at liberty to offer to your advantage; nor should I endure the thought of a fictitious adoption of the views of the patriotic faction, did I not regard it as the only available means of benefiting——" He hesitated.

"Speak out, Sir! You have nothing to fear from my comments or misconstruction—of benefiting, you would say the Marquise de St. Florentin. Well! make what compromise you can between your devotion to her interests,—those of the throne and the altar of your native coun-

try,—and your own peevish code of honour. For me," she added emphatically, "I have but one law,—one principle—one duty;—even that which includes an unlimited devotion unto my God, my country, and my old father."

Camille Valazy looked earnestly into Euphroisine's countenance as she uttered these words; and was almost startled to find there the same feminine delicacy of feature, and dove-like gentleness of eye, it had worn at the period when he regarded it as the index of a trifling and feeble mind. In spite of her noble regularity of feature, Mademoiselle Delplanque had something peculiarly girlish in her air and figure; a fragility amounting to insignificance. Yet under the admonition of those youthful and uncharactered lips, the spirit of Valazy was daunted.

"I read your thoughts," she resumed;—"you marvel at my boldness; at the recklessness of public opinion which has engaged me in a furtive interview with a comparative stranger—and above all, which has taught me to dispense with the authority of my father."

Camille felt the tremulous motion of the arm which rested upon his own.

"Yet am I neither over-bold, nor indifferent to the suffrage of the world; which guards by a minor but indispensable bond the moral existence of my sex. An era of general disorder has begun; and I cease to blame myself for my disregard of common fame, and the good report of the multitude, when I perceive that an inordinate value for these has left the purlieus of my sovereign's palace open to my approach. Had not the fickle parasites of Versailles looked rather to the *seeming* than to the *truth* of things, Marie Antoinette of France had not needed the reluctant services which I, the lowliest of her partizans, am come to crave of you in her name."

She paused in evident emotion; and Camille Valazy was about to make an elaborate declaration of his confidence in the purity of her motives and actions, when she hastened to interrupt him.

"It is enough, Sir!" said she. "I seek no commendations, and least of all from one whom

I regard as lukewarm in a cause which might surely animate all the energies of manhood in a generous bosom."

It was now Camille's turn to redden at her insinuation.

"Farewell! Monsieur Valazy!" she immediately rejoined, hastily disengaging her arm, and without listening to his rejoinder. "When you have pinned the badge of treason on your sleeve, I trust your wounded pride will not prevent you from visiting my father, and seeking those further instructions of which I shall probably become the means of communication. Remember that their urgency will brook no trifling, and no delay."

So saying, she passed abruptly from his side, and turning into an adjoining street, was out of sight in a moment.

"Am I awake?" thought Valazy, as he pursued his solitary way; "am I in my right senses, or is she?—Delplanque's daughter, the mincing *minaudière* of the Theatre of Trianon, to become the delegate of a crowned head!—The Queen—Emiline—to consort with a simple tradesman's daughter!"

The remembrance of his frequent advocacy of the equality of human rights and human virtues, suddenly jarred upon his mind; and a consciousness of the superiority of the being with whom he had been recently conversing—a superiority not unqualified by feminine delicacy and gentleness—reproved his apostacy from his earlier faith. He confessed to himself, meanwhile, that to become the faithful emissary of Madame de St. Florentin—the chosen brother of Euphroisine—were distinctions not unpromising for his own future happiness.

CHAPTER XVI.

Servi siam si,—ma servi ognor frementi.
ALFIERI.

It was at this juncture that the difficulties, the humiliations, and cruelties, progressively inflicted on the royal family, secured the end anticipated by their persecutors;—by rendering their projects desperate, and inciting them to some rash movement, sufficiently unpopular to warrant unqualified imprisonment. The unfortunate Louis hazarded a tardy sanction to the scheme concocted between his anxious family and the Marquis de Bouillé, and attempted to secure their general safety, by seeking refuge in a strong outpost, on the frontier of his agitated kingdom.

The Marquis de St. Florentin, who, at the earnest request of the Queen, had charged

himself with the cypher transmitting the pre-arrangement of the plan to Bouillé, who, as governor of Metz and Alsace, might be considered as viceroy over the north-eastern frontier, vainly represented to the King, that his sole chance of reaching Montmédy, the appointed fortress, was by the route of Flanders.

"I know," replied his Majesty, "to what misinterpretation my conduct is subjected; and it shall never be said, that I abandoned my kingdom through tenderness for my personal safety:—I will not set my foot on any other soil than that of France."* And thus the same deference to public opinion, the same timid apprehension of wounding the prejudices of a nation whose every hand and every voice was active against his peace,—became anew, and for the last time, a sunken rock, to wreck the frail vessel, which might perhaps have still weathered the storm of revolutionary excitement.

The passport which had been procured by St. Florentin, with the greatest difficulty and address, was consequently given up to Monsieur, who was sufficiently fortunate to reach

* Historical.

the frontier without molestation; while the Marquis, dispirited by a change of plan so fatal to his hopes, applied himself to the difficult task of seeking a new passport, which might conduct the royal party by the Châlons road. Having been once more successful in the attempt, it was agreed that he should accompany the fugitives as far as the post from which Bouillé, without exciting suspicion on the spot, might secure their further progress, by the convoy of a detachment of the troops under his command.

A cypher of assent to this new scheme of co-operation, had been received from the Marquis de Bouillé,—one of the purest and most unyielding royalists still retaining their faithful allegiance to a monarch, whom evil fortune had in some degree rendered an apostate to his own cause, and driven into a renouncement of that prerogative, which his adherents still asserted in his name. The strictest secrecy had been observed throughout the progress of these negociations; the very household of the Queen remained wholly unsuspicious of her intentions; for repeated betrayal had insinuated general

mistrust into a mind originally candid even to imprudence; and the most sanguine hopes began to renovate those drooping hearts which had long been steeped in the bitter tears of humiliation.

The Queen, with prudent foresight, having appropriated to the use of her daughter, a chamber belonging to a vacant suite of apartments, whence an unsuspected door opened to the court-yard of the Tuileries, it was now resolved that the royal party, including their Majesties, Madame Elizabeth, the Dauphin, and his sister, should singly escape through this obscure issue, at eleven o'clock at night; —(an hour when they were especially free from household attendance) — and severally reach an appointed spot, where the travelling carriage assigned to their use, with St. Florentin and two gentlemen of the body-guard, disguised as attendants, would be in waiting to receive them. So judiciously were these and other minor arrangements concerted, that had it not been for a lamentable, but unavoidable postponement in the outset of the expedition, through which the troops stationed for

their protection were compelled, by the suspicions of the mob, to desert their post previous to the arrival of the disguised fugitives, there can be little doubt that the ultimate safety of Louis XVI. and his unfortunate family would have been secured on this critical occasion.

It was with a view of aiding the progress of an undertaking requiring the stanchest fidelity in those admitted as its agents, that Madame de St. Florentin had intrusted to her enthusiastic *protegée* the delicate task of engaging the services of her foster-brother in its furtherance. But among the calamities endangering the success of every secret undertaking, at that epoch, was the general mistrust and *surveillance* which rendered communication and mutual understanding among the parties concerned, difficult on all occasions, and on some impossible. From the period when Euphroisine succeeded in attaching Camille Valazy to the party and pressing interests of her benefactress, the vigilance of the treacherous Flavie intercepted all means of intelligence between them; and the Marchioness, who had been absent from Paris, and was ignorant of the part taken by Valazy,

was at times tempted to believe that Euphroisine might have proved untrue to her cause.

On the morning of the fatal 21st of June, the arrival of a strange emissary on the part of Mademoiselle Bertin, in place of Euphroisine, who had undertaken to become the messenger announcing the final appointment of Marie Antoinette, satisfied her that either treachery or some grievous misfortune had deprived her of her energetic and favourite assistant. Her fears even induced her, for a moment, to accuse Camille as being the possible origin of her disaffection or mischance; but apprehension for the safety of those she loved—her husband and her sovereign—quickly obliterated all other considerations; and she soon forgot both him and her own suspicions.

Meanwhile Camille obeyed, with diligence and exactness, the instructions he had received from a source, and through a mediator, so interesting to his feelings. He had passed through the ordeal of Maximilien Valazy's suspicious scrutiny; who, nothing doubting that his kinsman entertained an ultimate and unacknowledged object for his sudden exertions,

subjected him to a severe cross-examination in the course of his very first interview with La Fayette. The result, however, was favourable to himself; for the general, anxious to secure the voices of the more respectable citizens, and to surround his person with active and able coadjutors, instantly distinguished the manly and intelligent spirit characterizing the young aspirant for the honours of the civic guard. He promised, and speedily redeemed his word, to have an eye to his advancement.

Scarcely had Camille invested himself in the accoutrements of his new vocation, when he hastened to fulfil the expectations of those to whose aid its services were secretly dedicated, by presenting himself at the house of Delplanque. He did not, however, succeed in gaining access to the presence of Euphroisine; and his suspicions being at length awakened by the pertinacity with which, day after day, he was refused admittance, he had recourse to an universal method of insinuation, and by a douceur to the surly domestic Cerberus of the *ex-mercier*, obtained some insight into this ill-timed and perplexing mystery.

On the very day of his last interview with Mademoiselle Delplanque, she had been denounced to the National Assembly as a disaffected person, and a secret agent of Marie Antoinette; and as the period had not yet arrived when persons could be arrested and imprisoned on such invalid suspicions, her effects were subjected, in the first instance, to the domiciliary inquisition of the municipal officers. But thanks to her own foresight and presence of mind, nothing was detected that could substantiate the charge; and after a slight, but vexatious public examination, she was set at liberty.

To Euphroisine herself, this transitory trial appeared but a trifling sacrifice towards the mighty cause in which she was engaged. She had been harassed and insulted, it was true; but the remembrance of Marie Antoinette, and of the humiliations to which *she* had been subjected, hushed every murmur upon her lips. Not so old Delplanque;—*his* selfishness had enlisted itself in no party—acknowledged no influence; nor was he susceptible of the least enthusiasm of spirit, to smooth the path of martyrdom. The ensanguined ghosts of Ré-

veillon, and Berthier, and Foulon, arose in his memory, the moment that a shouting populace cheered the entrance of the minions of the law into his dwelling;—he had wit enough to perceive that the extreme loveliness of Euphroisine, and her noble deportment under the examination of the Assembly, had attracted general attention towards his daughter and his ducats;—and he had no mind to be despoiled of either in favour of some beggarly democrat, who affected to be "wise," and had "never seen the Louvre." Elated beyond his hopes by the speedy enlargement of Euphroisine, whom no evidence could be found to criminate, he instantly resolved to secure the further safety of both by emigration, although not in its most extended sense.

Presenting the true ideal of a Parisian cockney, a *badaud* of most contracted perceptions, the capital was his country,—his *patrie*—the Marais his city of refuge from the commotions of the court; and in deserting them all for the wilderness of his native province, he became as very an emigrant as any Polignac or d'Artois of them all! Within twenty-four hours of Eu

phroisine's liberation, he was on the road towards Arras, to place himself and his daughter under the protection of his only brother; a flourishing merchant, whose influence was great in that city, "whatsoever king might reign." Vain was the resistance—vain the tears and entreaties of his agonized child. The first he met by parental authority, the second by the tenderest expostulations; and Euphroisine was forced to repress her glowing loyalty, and stifle the sense of her importance to her royal mistress, in the dread that her father's timid egotism might betray them, to the utter perdition of the royal cause. And thus, with a heart broken by grief and anxiety, she was fain to accompany the abdicated mercer to Arras; where he trusted, unknown and unsuspected, to dream away the gloomy night which obscured the face of public affairs, and the brilliant prospects of the capital.

"And did Mademoiselle Delplanque leave no letter for me—no communication?" inquired Camille.

"Mademoiselle, I flatter myself, is too discreet to correspond with strange gentlemen."

"And her father—did Monsieur mention no commission for me to execute?"

"None!" replied the dull and uncommunicative domestic. "But now I think on't, Mademoiselle requested you would take charge of a pot of carnations which stood in her chamber."

"And why did you not immediately forward it to me?"

"For what purpose? I have watered it daily, and 'tis a poor sickly plant, without a single flower."

"Nevertheless I am bound to comply with the commands of Mademoiselle, and to charge myself with her commission."

"As you please, Sir," said the sulky porter's wife; "but you may assure yourself that I have both leisure and zeal to look to Mam'selle Euphroisine's flowers."

Valazy, persuaded that some peculiarity was attached to the gift, instantly conveyed it in a fiacre to his lodgings; with eager anxiety lest some official interruption should separate him from that which he regarded as a sacred

deposit. Having arrived without hindrance in his own apartment, he hastily drew bolt and bar, and proceeded to the investigation of the mystery. The earth had evidently been recently disturbed; he hesitated not, therefore, to turn out the contents of the flower-pot; and his suspicions were instantly justified by the discovery of a square iron casket under the mould, containing 30,000 francs in sealed and labelled bags of double *louis-d'ors*, accompanied by the following billet:—

"I have little doubt that your sagacity will put you in possession of the accompanying gold, which I hold in deposit for the service of those persons whom you have recently heard me name with unqualified devotion. Denied as I am the valued privilege of prosecuting my exertions in their cause, leave me the consolation of believing that you will replace me in zeal and attachment. I have every reason to suppose that my secret accuser to the Assembly was the unworthy servant of one who is very dear to you; and that *you* also are

honoured by her remembrance and observations. Guard, therefore, as your life, the secret motives of a measure which I trust is by this time assured on your part. To say more, were to compromise your safety and my own. Farewell!"

CHAPTER XVII.

"I possess the chief place over the citizens."

"Thy house is then upon sand, thy bed upon briars, thy seat on a hollow, shrinking away to give thee a fall. Thy king, if good, is the servant of the public,—thou the slave of the multitude; the day of his coronation he died for himself, and began to live for others,—ay, and for many unjust considerers of his pains. Yet, when he is gone, they will wish him back again."

PETRARCH.—*De Contemptu Mundi.*

THE sudden disappearance of Euphroisine from the scene of action, deprived the disconcerted Valazy of that polar-star by which he had hoped to regulate his future movements. He knew that Madame de St. Florentin must still be in ignorance of his submission to her commands; but although his professional initiation had so fully occupied his time and atten-

tion as to have estranged his notice from the important events passing in the Delplanque family, it had not prevented him from making some general inquiries relative to the Marchioness, her views, and movements. He was aware that she still prolonged her visit to her father, secure from insult and molestation in the midst of a tenantry to whom she was endeared beyond a Jacobin's misleading; and thus, free from all uneasiness on her account, Camille was contented to fulfil the duties of the new calling he had adopted, and acquaint himself with the various occasions which might render it conducive to her future safety.

From the first hour of his enrolment in the ranks of the National Guard, he had the satisfaction of perceiving that he was considered by its commandant, the Marquis de la Fayette, with distinguishing favour; a circumstance which Maximilien Valazy failed not to attribute to his cousin's close kindred with an influential deputy and orator of the patriotic faction; and which Camille himself was rather inclined to trace to those very insinuations of royalism, suggested by his cousin with a far

different intention. *Le Blondinet*,—as La Fayette was familiarly nicknamed by the court of Versailles,—although professedly of the constitutional party, had omitted no occasion of affording personal protection to the unfortunate monarch whom he was anxious to reduce to the mockery of a mere state-puppet—of a nominal head to the most limited monarchy which triumphant rebellion ever yet shore of its beams. The King and Queen were at that period a sacred pledge entrusted by the nation to the guardianship of its civic force; and La Fayette was at once responsible to the assembly for the persons of his prisoners, and to his sovereign for his personal security from the evil will of the infuriated multitude.

But in the execution of this twofold trust, he had uniformly bid defiance to the lawless innovations of the people, and resisted the arrogant pretensions of the Jacobin and Brissotin factions; to which, under the ultra-banner of the Montagnards, Maximilien Valazy affected to hold himself attached. Careful, however, to shun the perils investing a house divided against itself, La Fayette remained on terms of

personal cordiality, singly and severally, with the members of the party which united its efforts against the throne and its ancient prerogative—against the court of Versailles and its influence; while he welcomed, or rather courted to his ranks, all such substantial citizens as had personal motives for repressing, by the iron barriers of martial law, the growth and innovations of civil anarchy,—and all such moderate constitutionalists as were willing to respect that fallen majesty which themselves had levelled with the dust. Notwithstanding the arbitrary influence attributed to his solitary will, it proved insufficient to re-establish the discipline of the troops under his command, when, on the recent occasion of the king's intended journey to St. Cloud, the National Guard had united its violence with that of the people to forbid his departure; and although La Fayette had been persuaded to resume the high military authority which at that crisis he had indignantly resigned, he neglected no opportunity to fortify the fidelity of his troops, and to surround himself with men of tried integrity and loyalty.

The family connexion uniting La Fayette and the Marquis de Bouillé has induced many to believe that a secret understanding existed between them, relative to the projected flight of the royal family; that the former, now awakened to the increasing ferocity of the mob, and the sanguinary views entertained by the leading members of the Assembly, had insisted upon the retention of his loyal kinsman in that high command which the revolt of Nancy had conceded to his military experience and personal influence; under the certainty that it would secure an eventual resource to the persecuted monarch and his family. It is known that the Marquis, during the early enthusiasm of his patriotic projects, spared no effort to attach the upright and loyal Bouillé to the constitutional party: nor has time even yet developed to what degree, the lessons of experience had attempered the opinions of La Fayette, and inclined him to favour the unlucky project organized by his royalist kinsman.

It was only a few days previous to the night fixed for the escape of the royal family, that Camille received an unsolicited appointment to

the post of aide-de-camp to his general; who, in overlooking the intermediary progression of rank in favour of one of the name of Valazy, was secure from provoking the displeasure of the Jacobins; while he knew that the moderate party placed a blind reliance on the wisdom of his own most trivial measures.

There exists probably no human distinction, of which the attainment is not an immediate source of pride and pleasure; and even Camille, restricted as he was in the projects of his ambition, and limited in his political views, could not regard with insensibility the notice of a man so distinguished as the Marquis de La Fayette. It was the first public honour conferred upon him; and it failed not to excite a thrill within his inmost heart, however engrossed by interests of a wholly opposite character. "Pray Heaven, I become not a partizan in right earnest," said he, as he looked on his new epaulet; "my heart is with the King,—my mind with his people; and my right arm shall devote itself to maintain peace between them,—while it guards from scathe the child of the noble benefactor of my youth. Welcome, however,

will be the day that restores the country to tranquillity, even at the sacrifice of some portion of the rights it claims; for the idol of liberty, which delights to find itself bathed in kindred-blood, is unworthy the sacrifices which load its reeking altars."

Such were the reflections which immediately followed his instalment in his uncoveted honours; but a second consideration taught him to regret his accession to a dignity, which might hereafter prove a fatal impediment to his exertions in the cause still dearer to his heart than that of king or country. In the course of the following day, as he was galloping with a despatch towards the Porte St. Denis, having encountered a carriage bearing the arms of St. Florentin and Navelles, he relaxed his speed to detect its entrance into the court-yard of the Hotel St. Florentin, where the Marquis himself was impatiently waiting the arrival of his beloved Emiline and of her children.

Although deeply agitated by this momentary view of the object of his enthusiastic attachment, he was enabled to detect the grievous changes effected by anxiety in her

appearance. He noticed the tremulous lip and wasted cheek, which was coloured with but a momentary hectic, as she approached the beloved home no longer affording her a refuge from affliction,—the beloved husband, whose fond esteem could no longer secure her from insult and dismay. But he knew not, nor could guess the exciting cause of her unusual emotion. She was come to take her last leave of the Marquis, previous to the final effort of his devotion in the royal cause;—she was come to be a hostage in the enemy's camp;—to take her first step in that public path of danger, which was hereafter to guide her through precincts of infamy, and horror, and *death!*

During the remainder of the day, the mind of Camille was divided between his duties, and a consideration of the manner in which he could avoid the appearance of officiousness in presenting himself to Emiline's recognition. But he was spared all unnecessary debates on the subject; for as he proceeded early on the morrow towards the Hotel de Ville, to render an account of his mission, he was met

by an orderly, requiring his immediate attendance on General la Fayette. Camille hastened forwards; and in the course of a few minutes he was summoned to the cabinet of the General, whom he found alone—seated at his writing table—and occupied in the attentive perusal of some official documents.

La Fayette looked up from his employment as Valazy entered, acknowledged his respectful salutation with a hasty nod, and resumed his work; and Camille, while he waited the leisure of his patron, interested himself in contemplating the figure and attitude of the man, who at that moment—more than king or orator—balanced the destinies of France. A clear stream of morning light fell from the lofty window upon his stern soldier-like countenance; his hair hung in unpowdered masses round his face; even his military array had somewhat relaxed its punctilio of etiquette; but the inflexible person of the General had been too long stiffened by the harness of war, to forfeit an iota of its formal dignity; and Camille could not divest himself of that feeling of personal awe with which we

gaze on those who bear the impress of having grappled with danger face to face, and of wearing laurels not altogether bloodless. So entirely was he engaged in this interesting contemplation, that he started at the abrupt tone of General La Fayette's first inquiry.

"You have some domestic relation with the family of St. Florentin. Explain to me, Sir, its origin and interests."

Valazy, who had not yet acquired the art of listening to that name unmoved, attempted to describe the nature of his connexion with the house of Navelles; interpolating his hurried narrative with repeated assurances that all intercourse between them had long ceased to exist.

La Fayette, who attributed this renegation of his former protectors to a motive far less honourable than that in which it really originated, sternly assured the young soldier that he did himself little credit by this vehement exculpation. "Ingratitude," said he, "is a bad pioneer to advancement; and to deny his master, was condemnation even to an apostle."

Camille was not sufficiently trained to habits

of subordination to let this charge pass unvindicated. "Could I accuse myself," he began ——

"Silence!" exclaimed the General. "I sent for you hither to receive my instructions, not to favour me with your own. Understand, therefore, that I am so little inclined to behold ties of family union disregarded—so little desirous of inflicting punishment where expostulation may still avail—that I could wish you," instinctively he lowered his peremptory voice, and glanced towards the door of the cabinet, "I could wish you to wait upon St. Florentin in my name,—and warn him,—and *intreat* him not to draw my attention too closely towards him *this day;—he* will understand my meaning. Tell him—he may tempt my forbearance beyond my official power of forgiveness; and beg him to believe, that the hazards he is about to incur are directed towards an unprofitable aim—towards a hopeless—an *utterly* hopeless conclusion."

He paused, and Camille marked his comprehension of the command, by a profound obeisance.

"You will remember that my commission does not include itself among your military duties—that it is, in short, confidential; and according to your diligence on the present occasion, will a good understanding be permanently established between us. Go, Sir;—your time is at your own disposal for the remainder of the day. Go, Sir,—and remember that I have said —*confidential.*"

Camille again bowed, and following the command implied by the General's extended hand, quitted the cabinet without delay. Understanding but imperfectly the implication contained in La Fayette's mysterious message, he perceived that it was one of considerable importance; and grateful for the confidence reposed in him, delayed not to execute the stern commandment of the General. Pausing only to throw off that uniform which so ill became the nuncio of a private and pacific mission—he proceeded—but not without perturbation—to the Hotel St. Florentin.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Tout est perdu pour toi, les tyrans sont vainqueurs,
Ton supplice est tout prêt ; si tu ne fuis, tu meurs,
Pars !—ne perds points de tems ; prend ce soldat pour guide,
Trompons des meurtriers l'espérance homicide,
Tu vois mon désespoir.

ALZIRE.

BEFORE Camille Valazy presented himself to fulfil the charge of the Marquis de la Fayette—St. Florentin had already quitted his home—for ever !

Having received, through the agency of the faithful Bertin, the final appointment of Marie Antoinette, and taken that melancholy adieu of seeming levity which has been already described, he determined to avoid all danger of interruption to his momentous project, by absenting himself from his family during the remainder of the day ;—devoting the morning to a recon-

noissance of the obstacles he was likely to encounter, on the route destined to be traversed at night by the royal fugitives;—and dining at an obscure restaurateur's, in the remote quarter where he had hired the travelling carriage and horses for their use.

Camille, who received in answer to his inquiries for the Marquis de St. Florentin, a simple assurance that he was absent from home, immediately determined to loiter in the neighbourhood till his return to the Hotel; but hour after hour passed away, the intense heat of the morning subsided into the cooler freshness of evening—the dimness of twilight,—and no St. Florentin appeared.—The approach of night distracted his mind with anxiety.—Was he too late?—Had that single hour of morning delay rendered his mission invalid? "*This day,*" had been the period emphatically nominated by La Fayette, as offering some danger expressly to be avoided;—did its close necessitate that danger's unwarned incurrence?

Valazy, bewildered by his conjectures, no longer hesitated to apply for an audience of the Marchioness herself; but the porter, having

transmitted the request through the intervention of Mademoiselle Flavie, instantly returned with a harsh negative to the petition. There was something in the phrasing of the message, which induced Camille to suspect, and with reason, that it had not been framed by the gentle Emiline; and persuaded that through some mischievous influence his prayer had been prevented from reaching her ear, he resolved to despatch a message to her in writing, and adjourned to a neighbouring coffee-house to effect his purpose. But the sight of the suspicious and disorderly beings congregated there, forcibly recalled to his mind the danger that might arise, were any billet intercepted sufficiently forcible in its expressions to awaken the alarms of the Marchioness. He returned, therefore, in anxious haste towards the hotel, trusting that among its exits and its entrances he should encounter some faithful envoy through whom he might again address its lovely mistress.

Scarcely had he regained the court-yard, —for it was already night,—when a carriage drew up to the door, and Emiline, brilliant in jewels, and robed in all the glowing ele-

gance of fashion,—attired, in short, for the *fête* of the Duc de Nivernois,—glanced for an instant before his eyes!

Camille shuddered as the carriage rolled away.—"Deplorable levity!" he exclaimed, "fatal vanity!—will neither the sufferings, nor the perils of her country,—her sovereign,—her kindred,—her very self,—suffice to neutralize its fantastic folly!—Emiline!—Emiline!—There is mockery in the glimmering of thy jewelled attire,—there is accusation in the lightness of thy step at such an hour;—and had I been often permitted to see thee thus—could thy present image efface the heavenly dream of my boyhood,—Heaven knows the thraldom of my heart would quickly end."

The Swiss was still standing, flambeau in hand, upon the steps; and Camille eagerly profited by so fortunate an opportunity for further interrogation. "Was the Marquis de St. Florentin," he inquired, "likely to meet his lady at the Hotel Nivernois?"—the address he had heard given to the servants.

"The Marquis was gone into the country."

"When?—where?"—

But instead of replying, the man hastily extinguished his flambeau, and retreated from the importunate questions of an obscure foot-passenger, whose visit had been so cavalierly declined by the *femme-de-chambre de Madame la Marquise!*

Valazy was now half inclined to attempt a momentary interview with Emiline on her departure from the *féte;* and taking his way towards the Hotel Nivernois, he stationed himself amid the murmuring crowd which surrounded the illuminated mansion whence the sound of music and festivity issued in frightful contrast. To escape the horrible execrations which met his ear on every side,—the menaces poured forth upon the heads of those who derided the starving populace by their intemperance in the hour of scarcity,—mingled with anticipations of a speedy and bloody triumph,—Camille turned towards the Boulevards; a spot almost deserted at that hour of the night.

It was the noon-tide of the year,—the glowing luxuriance of June;—that month whose blossomy glory not even the pollution of a city can wholly subdue, when sweet odours

prevail over the earth,—bright hues are glancing even on the stoniest wall; and every green thing adorns itself with the utmost pride of array vouchsafed to its lowliness. A clear grey summer night twinkling with one solitary star that seemed to shrink from finding itself alone on the wide heavens, had hushed the atmosphere into stillness. The hum of the city was over; the artizan had gone to his feverish rest; and Camille, as he paced along the deserted Boulevard, marvelled that the fragrance bursting from its lime-trees, and from the adjoining gardens, had not power to attract the sickly mechanic from his squalid den, or the still more sickly votary of dissipation from the crowded chambers infested by noxious exhalations. When he thought of the scene of riot and folly whence he had just escaped, he felt inclined, for a moment, to revert to his early prejudices against the arrogant luxury of the aristocracy, and to utter a general anathema against that wantonness of excess, which even the humiliation and grief of the sovereigns they affected to cherish with such holy loyalty, were insufficient to moderate.

He turned from the image of the radiant Emiline, to the recollection of the pale and saddened girl who hung on his arm when last he trod that Boulevard ;—whose beauty was subdued and soft as the balmy night hovering over his head ;—and whose thoughts were as elevated, and whose mind as bright, as the one clear star that glanced amid its shadows.

Engrossed by these meditations, and reminiscences, Camille pursued his solitary way along the Boulevards ; till, in one of the most unfrequented quarters, he was struck by the appearance of a heavy travelling carriage with four horses, which was waiting as if in expectation of some additional passengers. While inwardly commenting upon the loveliness of the season for a midnight journey, his steps were overtaken by two females, who passed onwards with hurried avoidance ; and by the light of a lamp which partially illuminated their faces, he noticed that they were meanly apparelled, but that the countenance of the one nearest to himself, although tinged with a death-like paleness, was exquisitely lovely. As they

reached the carriage, without a spoken word, or a moment's delay, the door was opened;—they hurried up the steps; and it was evident that they were welcomed by those within with the fondest warmth of gratulation. In a minute, a voice required in the German language the coachman to proceed, and the equipage rolled rapidly along the Boulevard.

A sudden consciousness as quickly enlightened the mind of Camille, increasing as the rumble of its cumbrous wheels lessened in the distance. The hour,—the occasion,—the mysterious haste of the travellers excited his first suspicion;—and on reflection, the beautiful face on which he had gazed, distinctly bore the peculiar lineaments of the Bourbon countenance.—It was undoubtedly that of Madame Elisabeth, the only member of the royal family personally unknown to him; and the coachman, of whose figure he had caught a momentary glimpse, was as surely St. Florentin himself!—His respectful air as he turned towards the carriage for final commands, demonstrated that some person of supreme rank was lodged within;—yes! every circumstance now appeared explanatory

of La Fayette's oracular warning;—every circumstance betrayed in the persons of these midnight fugitives—the Royal Family of France!

The whole truth was scarcely less manifest than the importance of the crisis! Not a moment was to be lost;—life and death—perhaps, the lives and deaths of thousands, hung suspended with every dropping grain of sand;—and Camille, fondly trusting that his utmost speed might yet intercept the carriage at the Barrière, instantly flew off with eager and untiring zeal in the direction it had taken. In the impetuosity of his course, the earth seemed to recede beneath his steps;—he saw not, felt not,—his breath was restrained as by an iron girdle round his bosom;—a sense of agony urged on his bounding feet, and superseded even his doubts of success. There it was before him!—that dark, and seemingly indifferent object, moving forward in the distance,—whose attainment would form a triumph for his future life, and perhaps a preservative for many an innocent victim;—whose attainment might have been compassed by the delay of a moment—by the intervention of a stone

on the road!—But its destiny was otherwise appointed!—

At about forty paces from the Barrière St. Martin, Camille, dreading the observation of the municipal and national officers stationed there, checked the suspicious violence of his speed. Aided by the flashing lamps of the office, he had the mortification of seeing the passport returned into the carriage, by the soldier on duty; and before he could rush forwards, a hoarse exclamation of "*Allons! en route!*" and a furious incitement of the whip, put the stately vehicle again in motion, at a very different rate from its previous movements. Nor did Valazy attempt to follow its accelerated speed; the impossibility of overtaking the carriage was glaringly evident; and he felt assured that the betrayal of any undue solicitude or exertion, could not fail to attract the attention of the gendarmerie towards its contents.

With an air of indifference, therefore, he sauntered towards the guard-house; where, under pretence of arranging his watch by the light of the lamp, he entered into conversation with the soldier who was smoking at the door;

—affecting to ridicule the cumbersome equipage, and heavy load of the recent travellers. "But they were a squadron of German thick-skulls?" he observed, in a half-interrogatory tone.

"The Baroness de Korff and her family, returning to Germany;—and I wish we were as well rid of all other importations from the wrong side of the Rhine, or that they were smothered in their own *sauer-kraut*. If my advice were to be taken, *morguienne*, the Austrian, and all her gang, should be crushed like so many toads!"

Valazy shuddered with horror, when he remembered that the safety of "the Austrian" had been placed but a few seconds before at this ruffian's disposal! Nor did it dispel his anxiety to remember by how many voices in the kingdom these sentiments, and others of similar atrocity, were unceasingly re-echoed. The King and Queen had escaped the vigilance of their janitors,—he could no longer doubt it; but without possessing the slightest index to their design, or any suspicion of their ultimate destination, he felt

persuaded that the forewarning insinuated by La Fayette, had not been inadvertently given; and that a path conducting through observant millions of exasperated enemies, would not prove secure from mischief. But reflection came too late; and the only measure of redress that occurred to his mind, was to hasten, if possible, his purposed interview with Emiline, and withdraw one martyr from the general sacrifice.

As he retraced the steps of his fruitless course along the Boulevard,—the deepening uproar of some popular tumult became distinctly audible; and a lurid reflection reddened the atmosphere, just where the palace of the Duc de Nivernois was sending forth the clash of its festal cymbals into the midnight air. Camille started; and anticipating some danger for its thoughtless inmates, began to revile himself as he hurried along, for having presumed to utter one thought of condemnation touching the fairest and dearest of them all. So deeply, so vainly do we deceive ourselves, in affecting to note with impartiality the errors of those we love!

Finding it impossible to penetrate the avenues, already invested by an outrageous mob, Camille began to reconnoitre the issues leading from the Boulevards to the Hotel; where the guests still remained ignorant of a tumult, deafened by the joyousness of their mirth; and as he watched the open windows of the heated ball-room, he became an involuntary witness to the interview between Mirepoix and Emiline de St. Florentin. He distinguished not indeed the express words passing between them; but the tender inflection of their voices reaching his ear, misled him into a belief that it was gallantry, rather than a patriotic sympathy, which had thus withdrawn them from the gay assemblage to seek refuge in each other's kindness of heart. He saw the Marchioness leaning, with heavy sighs, against the marble window-seat; and believing them to be directed to the ear of a paramour, could scarcely restrain his indignation. "Deluded woman!" murmured Camille, as the flashing of the lights within revealed the more than earthly beauty of her jewelled brow, "Can no ties, no perils, no warn-

ings restrain thee?—Danger is around thy path; —death is perhaps advancing, with gloating eye, to feed his ravening hunger on thy cheek; —and he will find thee,—will find thee,—wretched woman! in dalliance with a libertine!"

A wilder shout from the inner court of the Hotel proclaimed some fresh outrage;—but the time for warning was expired: Mirepoix and his partner had already left the window. Again Camille accused himself of having been harsh and premature in his judgment; but ere he had time to amend his fault by attempting to gain access to the mansion, he beheld the object of his anxiety—carefully guarded by the stranger whom he believed to be her lover, effect her escape from the now alarmed assembly. He heard the Chevalier, in terms of the fondest endearment, urge her to be calm and silent during their flights;—as she clung to his protecting side, Camille, with indignant wonder, heard him name her "Emiline—*his* Emeline!"—"And I!" he exclaimed, "I who scarcely dared entitle her thus, even in my purest prayer—even in the secret solitude of my midnight tears!"

Her mantle touched him as she passed;—and he shook off the contact as if it could convey a pestilential contagion;—yet still the thought of other times, and the feelings with which they were interwoven, prompted him to follow the footsteps of the fugitives. He saw the Marchioness deposited in safety at her Hotel; and alternately thanked Heaven for her escape, and cursed her preserver and the dishonourable tie which had bound him to her assistance.

The night was now far advanced; and as Camille, weary and disgusted, regained his own habitation, he felt in some degree consoled for the ill success of his enterprize, by his discovery of the unworthiness of the person who had formed the chief incitement to his zeal. But on arriving in his chamber, the first object which met his observation was a communication in cypher from La Fayette, reanimating in a moment his exhausted faculties.

"I find you have been too late, and fatally so!—I will not prejudge your remissness, but require you to repair the fault by proceeding a second time—and *instantly*—to the same quar-

ter.—See *her* at all risks; tell her the attempt has failed;—that suspicion is already astir, and is only suspended by the lateness of the hour. The Committee of Research will visit her by daybreak—her escape must be immediate or unavailing."

Camille Valazy had no hesitation in referring the mysterious *her* to the Marchioness de St. Florentin. He threw on his uniform, believing its authority might be some advantage in case of an altercation with any civil officer; and as he once again, and with a beating heart, approached her Hotel, he trembled on discovering that faint red streaks were already discernible in the east.

On Emiline's return from the ball, the venerable Laporte himself had come forward to receive her; and when Camille once more, and with uncompromising peremptoriness summoned the porter from his slumbers, he demanded, in the name of La Fayette, and by virtue of his habit, an immediate interview with the old steward, to whom, from his boyhood, he had been favourably known. In this startling emergency,

the old man evinced more presence of mind than could have been expected. He readily entered into the scheme of flight suggested by Camille on the hint of a passport inclosed in the communication of General La Fayette; and agreed with him in the necessity of exaggerating the danger of the Marchioness's position, in order to expedite her departure. The foresight of Valazy had posted his own carriage in the adjoining street; and Laporte himself undertook to accompany the instant flight of his mistress and her children. Both were already sanguine of success, when the obstinacy of Emiline at once overthrew their scheme, and restored her entire influence over the mind of her worshipper.—He looked upon her beauty,—listened to her noble declarations,—and again adored her!

But it was no time to indulge in such emotions; to save her—to guard her—to ward off the coming blow was his immediate consideration. Already he seemed to behold her abandoned to the rufflanly insolence of the minions of the law—already an agony of apprehension overwhelmed his heart. The danger, the im-

minent danger of his fugitive king became as nothing; for in the cause of Louis many a sword would be drawn, many a pleading voice become eloquent. But Emiline—the helpless mother of still more helpless children—Emiline appeared forsaken by her lawful protector, and abandoned to perils provoked by his own rashness!—He resolved to repair without delay to the Hotel de Ville, and gather from La Fayette himself some tidings of the royal fugitives, and instructions for the further defence of those who had been endangered by their escape from Paris.

CHAPTER XIX.

Les droits qu'un esprit vaste, et ferme en ses desseins,
Prend sur l'esprit grossier des vulgaires humains.

VOLTAIRE.

As Valazy approached the Hotel de Ville, hastened by the hope of instant, or early admittance to a confidential audience of La Fayette, he was struck, on approaching the Place de Grève, by an appearance of premature animation in the adjoining streets. The shops, usually closed at so early an hour of the morning, were now filled with idlers, evidently assembled by motives of curiosity rather than of commercial interest; while even in the carriage ways of the streets and the square, detached groups of busy politicians were engaged among themselves in some vehement discussion, which

appeared to Valazy connected with some new crisis of public interest. The names of the King and Queen, repeated in various tones of disgust, and hatred, and resentment, soon struck his ear; and long before he gained the steps of the Hotel de Ville, the rumours of the angry multitude acquainted him that authentic intelligence of the flight of their Majesties had that moment reached the authorities.

Hastening up the crowded stairs, he perceived La Fayette engaged in earnest conversation with Bailly, Gouvion, and a woman of the Queen's wardrobe attended by two soldiers of the National Guard, who seemed to have been the bearers of this startling piece of information; and while the former was apparently deliberating on some further precautionary measure, Camille bent a look of eager inquiry on his countenance, to ascertain if possible, to what extent the politic General had been previously involved in the affair. In truth, the character of this remarkable man was still imperfectly developed, even by his own partizans. He was well known to have brought with him from the emancipated provinces of America, an

enthusiastic zeal for the cause of civil liberty; yet the courtly urbanity of his address at once repelled all familiarity on the part of the rude and ferocious faction of the Parisian Revolutionists, and induced them to suspect his secret inclination towards that aristocratic ascendancy, with which his own mind and manners appeared so well assimilated. Meanwhile the frankness and *bonhommie* of his demeanour towards the populace, his seeming deference to their prejudices, and above all the intrepid coolness of his demeanour on occasions of popular disturbance, secured him the confidence of the citizens, and an unlimited command over the passions of the mob. In more than one crisis of public excitation, his simple authority had arrested the course of national violence, and suspended the effusion of blood: so true it is that a man never obtains a complete sway over the passions of others, but when he exhibits a mastery over his own.

But Camille Valazy, although amply satisfied of the rectitude of La Fayette's principles, and of his honest desire to strip the monarchy of his native country of the dangerous preroga-

tive gradually assumed by the House of Bourbon, could not divest himself of a belief that the General had been secretly inclined to favour a measure, whereby the anointed sovereign of France might be saved from ultimate sacrifice ;—a sacrifice which his recent humiliation rendered a superfluous atonement to his subjects,—and a needless lesson to the despotic monarchs of other countries or future ages. Thus far, however, was clear ;—that he was fully aware of the part taken in the plot by the family of St. Florentin. Profiting by a moment's confusion in the chamber, he turned towards his aide-de-camp, as if for the purpose of some professional instruction.

" Your agency, Sir, I perceive has been unavailing !" said he, in a stern but subdued tone. " I require no particulars," he continued, waving his hand as Camille was about to enter on an explanation. " It is enough that this rash enterprise has been attempted."

Then turning to the two soldiers of the National Guard, he inquired whether any indications had transpired of the route taken by the fugitives ; and learning that general opinion

pointed to that of Flanders, he appeared to coincide in the belief; and continued to receive with the most composed indifference, a thousand contradictory statements which now poured in upon him relative to the mode of escape, and direction of flight adopted by the royal family. It has since been ascertained, that the first person encountered by Marie Antoinette and Madame Elisabeth, on leaving the Tuileries, was La Fayette himself; mounted on the white charger which habitually rendered him so conspicuous to the Parisian populace; but whether his own blindness on that occasion were real, or a merciful assumption, can never be proved unless by his own avowal at some future period.

The populace crowded together in the Place de la Grève, and under the windows of the Hotel de Ville,—where the whole body of the municipal officers were now assembled,—soon exhibited their usual ferocity; and the menaces and imprecations of the mob were now distinctly heard in the council chamber, upbraiding Bailly the mayor of Paris, and even La Fayette himself, as accomplices in the escape of the royal family; and threatening them

with summary punishment for so gross an act of treachery toward the nation. Bailly was extremely anxious to exculpate himself from this unjust charge, by haranguing the people; but La Fayette, who had already beheld Foulon and his son-in-law Berthier de Sauvigny, dragged from the balcony to an immediate and cruel death, strove by the coolest expostulations to dissuade his colleague from the rash attempt; —pointing out at the same time to his notice, the fatal lantern already prepared for themselves.

"The National Assembly is aware of the peril of our predicament," said he, without deigning to explain in what manner he had procured the welcome intelligence. "Our safety cannot be a matter of indifference to them:—let us leave it in their hands."

To the satisfaction of all parties, his conjectures were speedily realized. In another minute the tumult of the riotous populace below was suddenly checked; and a considerable detachment of the National Guard was seen by the prisoners in the council-chamber to enter and traverse the square fronting the Hotel de Ville. No obstacle was opposed to their passage,

when it became known among the mob that these troops were commissioned to conduct the mayor, as well as La Fayette, and Gouvion, before the *Assemblée Constituante*, to render an account of their culpable negligence; and to be present at the opening of the proclamation of Louis XVI. to the Parisians,—explanatory of the motives of his flight, and descriptive of the injurious treatment to which he had been subjected;—and of the instructions for his ministers deposited by the King previous to his departure in the hands of Monsieur de la Porte, Intendant of the civil list. The irritated mob readily gave way to the passage of their general and his companions, under military escort; persuaded that they were only surrendering their victims to the judgment of a tribunal, as severely disposed towards the prisoners as their own worst feelings could desire.

The measures of the *Assemblée Constituante* in this exigency, exhibited a character of promptitude, energy, and moderation, such as it had rarely displayed on less important occasions. The ministers were severally apprized of the escape of the King, and summoned to

assist at a general deliberation on the measures to be adopted. No person was allowed to pass the barriers during the day; couriers were despatched into the departments, preventing the progress of all travellers towards the frontiers; several strong detachments were placed in the disaffected sections of the city, and others stationed for the protection of the Hall of Assembly. When La Fayette and his companions reached the bar, Alexandre de Beauharnois,* who acted as President, was in the act of making known to the Assembly the reports of the commissioners who had been dispersed throughout Paris to investigate the dispositions of the people; and of the deputies who had been commissioned to ascertain whether the crown jewels had been carried off by the royal fugitives: and the assurance conveyed by these reports of the perfect tranquillity of the citizens, and of their unabated confidence in the integrity of their representatives, seemed to impart a corresponding degree of firmness and self-security to the proceedings of the Assembly. The examination of La Fayette and

* The first husband of the Empress Josephine.

his coadjutors was followed up with a sufficient appearance of rigour to satisfy the misgivings of the mistrustful populace. A direct charge was made of culpable negligence on the part of the National Guard—and of co-operation on that of the municipality—but only to be plausibly refuted; and the ministers of the crown, who had been summoned having at length arrived, the celebrated proclamation of Louis XVI. was officially read to the Assembly.

The reproaches and accusations against the National Assembly contained in this interesting address, served of course rather to irritate than to effect any intimidation upon its auditors. They were upbraided by the King with having attempted the total destruction of the French monarchy, and with seeking to extend the civil anarchy of Paris throughout every part of the kingdom; but nothing could be more easy than to refute a charge, in which the party accused was also both judge and juror; and the excesses and rapacity of the court of Versailles, the unconstitutional innovations of the former ministry, as well as the unyielding tenacity of the King, were again and again

brought forward by various popular orators as pretexts for the severities and privations inflicted upon the royal family between the autumn of 1789, and the ensuing season. "The conspiracy formed by the Bourbon family against the sovereignty of the nation," became for the thousandth—but not, alas! for the last time—a specious watchword to the passions of the Assembly; and although the declamations of Mirabeau no longer dignified the phrase by their hollow eloquence, the theme was hotly and successfully pursued by others, who covered their own deficiencies with the descending mantle of the prophet of their creed.

Before the Assembly proceeded to the order of the day, La Fayette begged to point out to their notice the aid-de-camp by whom he was attended at the bar. "In presenting to you, gentlemen," said he, "this young soldier as the near kinsman and namesake of your esteemed colleague, Maximilien Valazy, the tried friend of the people, and the undeviating opponent of their tyrants, I feel secure of interesting your confidence in his execution of your commands. I am about to despatch him offi-

cially on the route to Mons, which appears the probable direction of the journey of their Majesties; claiming such assistance of the local authorities upon his way, as may best enable him to secure the persons of the fugitives, without violating the respect due to a sovereign of the French nation."

"Two couriers were sent off in that direction nearly an hour ago," observed Péthion. "I should, therefore, rather recommend the road to Metz: it is evident that the aristocrat Bouillé and his myrmidons form a magnet by whose attraction we are likely to unearth the royal fox which has escaped our vigilance."

"I have already despatched my senior aide-de-camp, Monsieur Antoine de Romeuf, on the route to Metz," observed General La Fayette composedly.

"The more reason," retorted Péthion, "for following up his mission by that of the Capitaine Valazy. Romeuf is known to be one of those idle Mirliflors, whose minds have been polluted by the sorceries of the Circe of Versailles. His secret inclinations towards the royal cause will not fail to betray our own, un-

less we drive the nail into the block by a second blow of the mallet. Let Valazy proceed without further parley to Châlons."

This opinion being confirmed by the general voice of the Assembly, La Fayette publicly delivered to Camille the instructions which were to regulate his proceedings. "You will use your best expedition in a mission so critical; but I feel persuaded that your utmost haste will not gain sufficient ground on the fugitives," said he, glancing from the clock suspended over the seat of the President to the countenance of his aide-de-camp; and, as it appeared to Valazy, with a look of peculiar significance. "Go, Sir!" he continued, resuming his usual air of stern authority. "I am satisfied that you appreciate the importance of your charge; and that *none* of my instructions touching this important affair will be forgotten or disregarded."

On leaving the Assembly to proceed to its ordinary deliberations, while he visited the château of the Tuileries for further investigation, La Fayette was greeted by the populace with cries of disapprobation and vengeance,

such as he had been little accustomed to hear applied to himself; and Camille, and one or two officers of his staff by whom he was accompanied, attempted to surround his person with a view to his defence, as he traversed the infuriated multitude. But the General, with a smile of perfect self-possession, motioned them from his side; and boldly advanced through the hootings of the mob.

"My friends!" said he, to those of the discontented nearest to him in the mélée; "you are pleased to term the escape of the King a national misfortune. What would you say to a counter-revolution calculated to destroy the liberty you have acquired?"*

The fickle crowd, lending to these expressions a more extended implication than had been anticipated by the speaker, now flew into an opposite extreme; and began to hail the departure of Louis XVI. as an event auspicious to their own interests. "We are at length freed from the Bourbon gang!" they exclaimed, with renewed shouts in honour of their favourite commander; while a portion of the populace

* Historical.

even raised a cry of "Long live La Fayette; let *him* be our new King!—Yes! La Fayette shall be our King!"

The General, turning towards the vacillating crew with an air of mingled compassion and indignation, exclaimed, "And what have I done, my friends, to deserve your bad opinion? How have I merited that you should hold me worthy of no better office?"

On this specious phrase the citizens redoubled their huzzas in his honour, and suffering him to proceed upon his way, Valazy seized the opportunity to escape for the execution of the important mission committed to his charge.

Within an hour, Camille found himself galloping along the road, which, alas! full well he knew to have been taken by the illustrious fugitives. But although resolved to interpret the glance of La Fayette into a secret implication that his haste upon the route to Metz need not be over zealously accelerated, he had the mortification to discover at each succeeding relay, that the couriers despatched by the Assembly, as well as his co-adjutor, Monsieur de Romeuf, had outstripped him by nearly two hours, and

that there was little chance that the ponderous equipages of the Baroness Von Korff could attain the frontier, before they were overtaken and arrested. Satisfied, therefore, that his mission would be infructuous to the party it was intended to benefit, he found no motive to overlook his personal fatigue and anxiety,—for he had been without rest or interval of tranquillity, for more than four-and-twenty hours; nor his secret regret at being forced to abandon Paris under circumstances so fraught with danger to the wife of the Marquis de St. Florentin. Stung to the very heart's core by the hauteur of her demeanour towards him on the preceding night,—yet with a lover's inconsistency adoring the hand upraised in scorn against him—it must be acknowledged that Camille Valazy, as he urged his horse to its utmost speed along the stately avenues of the road to Meaux, thought more of the perils and insults which might await the unprotected Emiline from the deputation of the committee of research, than of those which the fugitive Bourbons had so rashly braved in their escape from the Tuileries; and dwelt with more emotion on the recollected

tones of Madame de St. Florentin's recurrence to Madelon's affection, than on the recommendatory terms in which he had been presented to the constituted government, by the most illustrious patriot of the day.

Depressed in body and mind—heart-sick with vexation,—and sinking under fatigues to which he had been ill-accustomed by his recent modes of life,—Valazy, towards night, could scarcely keep on his saddle. His head grew dizzy, and his eyes appeared to rest once more upon that waving sea of heads, whose fierce undulations he had witnessed on the Place de la Grève; and whose horrible imprecations seemed to ring in his ears. Such—such—were the ruffians to whose animosity St. Florentin had dared bequeath his helpless wife and children; such the human fiends to whose vengeance he had been himself compelled to abandon the idol of his bosom! The mere thought of the indignities to which she had been perhaps already subjected, served like a spur to his flagging haste. Having obtained the refreshment of a cup of wine from a peasant proceeding home from his protracted labours in the

vineyards, he pushed onwards with renewed activity; but on reaching the royal post-house at Chalons, he had the mortification to find, not only that the preceding couriers had considerably gained upon him in the hour of their arrival and departure, but that the equipages of the royal travellers had excited no trifling degree of suspicion in their passage through the town. In fact, the post-masters on the roads of Lorrain were so accustomed to the spectacle of emigrants and fugitives, that they looked with jealous inquiry upon every equipage bespeaking a family of consideration, and taking the route to the frontier.

Valazy now perceived that all hope of escape was lost for the royal family; unless, indeed, they had been so fortunate as to secure a very active co-operation on the part of the Marquis de Bouillé and his troops; a circumstance to which popular suspicion already pointed previous to his departure from Paris. Yet it appeared to him—judging from the trivial causes which had combined to negative his own eager attempts to obtain an interview with the Marquis de St. Florentin—that some miserable

fatality was attached to the undertaking; and that notwithstanding the generous or politic moderation of La Fayette, it would be found as impossible to secure the progress of the measure, as it had already proved to intercept the attempt. — His misgivings on this point were speedily realized. On reaching Pont de Somme Vesle, a post-station three leagues beyond the town of Châlons, Valazy encountered upon the little bridge which unites the cross road to Varennes with the high road to Verdun, a messenger, taking his way at full speed to Paris; who, at sight of an officer of the National Guard, drew up to announce that the King and Queen, or as he called them, "*Les royaux*," had been arrested at Varennes!

He stated that the person of his Majesty had been recognized by the light of a stable lantern intruded into the carriage at St. Ménéhould by a man named Drouet, son to the postmaster, who had seen him at Paris the preceding year, on the day of the Federation; and who now identified the countenance of his sovereign with the engraving on an *assignat* which he drew from his pocket. After giving such instructions

to the postilions as would ensure the impossibility of reaching the post-horses despatched to Varennes from the opposite station to carry them forward to Dun, Drouet followed them on horseback; and having ascertained that no escorts were stationed for their rescue, he denounced them to the authorities of the paltry town destined to be the scene of their betrayal!

The suspicions of the inhabitants of St. Ménéhould had unfortunately been excited and kept on the alert during two preceding days, by the arrival of several detachments of dragoons, such as were stationed by Bouillé in all the different post-towns of the route between Châlons and Montmedy, on pretext of escorting a waggon-load of specie from Paris; but which did not fail to direct the apprehensions of the multitude to their real purpose. The troops commanded by the Duc de Choiseul and the Marquis de Goguelas, who were appointed to await the arrival of the king's equipage at Pont de Somme Vesle, had, in fact, been compelled by the insults of the mob to abandon their post; and, misled by misrepresentations that a heavy travelling carriage of the description they were taught to ex-

pect, had passed through the village at an early hour of the morning; while Goguelas unwisely conducted his men back to Varennes through the woods of Clermontois, leaving the field clear to the enemies of his sovereign. Unfortunately their assistance in the town of Varennes, if more active, proved equally ineffectual.

"But are you sure," said Camille, eagerly interrogating the man, "that it is really the King and Queen you have secured?"

"Am I sure!" said the courier, indignantly; "Was it not my own good cousin, Drouet, who was beforehand with them at Varennes,—who summoned the National Guard—imprisoned Bouillé's rampaging dragoons in the convent of the Cordeliers, where they were comfortably roosted for the night;—and, with the help of Procureur Sausse, the candle maker, and Billaud, and half-a-dozen other townsmen as well disposed as themselves, blocked up the bridge with their market-carts against the passage of Dame Korff's berline? *Parbleu! nof ancien, ces gaillards là* were not of the sort to let the Capet family slip through their fingers like a base half-crown."

"And where did you leave their Majesties?" inquired Valazy, but too well convinced of the authenticity of his account.

"I left the Bourgeoise de Versailles sipping coffee in Madame Sausse's back shop; and in spite of the hootings and howlings of the multitude gathered round the house, trying to flatter old Sausse into conniving at their escape, by praising the freshness of the eggs set before her for breakfast, the frilled garnitude of their *lit de parade*,—and protesting she adored the smell of tallow! But *la commère* Sausse is no gudgeon to be fished up out of the Meuse with such a bait as that; and——"

"And the troops stationed in the town?"

"Are deafening the King and Queen with shouts for '*la Nation*.'"

"Nay, I spoke of Monsieur's dragoons, and the regiment of royal hussars."

"*Tudieu!* of who else? I tell you Bouillé's dragoons are shouting in honour of the nation as loudly as if they wore an uniform of the same facings with your own.—But I am loitering here, Sieur Capitaine, without thinking of the packet I am to deliver from Procureur

Sausse to the Commandant at Châlons;—for which I mean to carry back in exchange a packet of assignats, in reward of my diligence, —to say nothing of the little sip of cassis, with which I must wash the dust from my throat in order to recount all these particulars to Monsieur le Maire at the Hotel de Ville."

This information was too detailed, and too conclusive, to admit of any distrust on Valazy's part. Fearful of implicating the Marquis de St. Florentin, who had not been specified by the courier as forming part of the royal cortege, he had abstained from making any inquiries which could involve his name in the affair. But Camille did not doubt that the husband of Emiline had shared the arrest of the Duc de Choiseul and the Comte Charles de Damas, who had been mentioned among the group of prisoners detained in the mansion of the Procureur Syndic; and he thought with horror and consternation of the penalty incurred by his share in the plot. He found that previous to the departure of the courier, Monsieur de Romeuf had arrived at Varennes, and been compelled to deliver to the municipal officer the

official mandate of General La Fayette, commanding the arrest of the royal family, and their compulsory return to Paris,—a service for the execution of which he was bitterly reviled by Marie Antoinette. But Valazy was aware that his young colleague entertained the most enthusiastic confidence at once in the intentions and powers of their common chief; and that in attempting to assure the Queen of the protection and security she would derive from the guardianship of the commander-in-chief of the National Guard, he was only expressing his sincere conviction on the subject. He rejoiced, however, that the painful duty of bearing this mandate had not been imposed on himself. He felt that the reproaches of Madame de St. Florentin's illustrious friend would have been deeply afflicting to his heart; and that *he* could not have conscientiously uttered an assurance of safety, where he was secretly persuaded of the existence of dangers of the darkest kind. The more fully he became aware of La Fayette's desire to favour the escape of their Majesties, the more was he assured of impending dangers yet unsuspected by the public!

But his own course!—how could he best reconcile his official duties with his intimate persuasion of the secret views of his commanding officer, and with the suggestions of his own grateful predilections? Suddenly recollecting the family connexion between Bouillé and La Fayette, he resolved to make it a pretext for a private communication with the former; and instead of proceeding on the road to St. Ménéhould, he now struck off through the woods,—following the track left by the squadrons on the preceding day,—and took his way at full speed towards Dun, where he doubted not to meet with further intelligence. He was persuaded that, on the first alarm of the royal arrest, the Marquis de Bouillé, with the regiment of *Royal Allemand*, and others of approved fidelity from the camp recently formed at Montmédy, would attempt the rescue of the King; and resolving on his own part to suggest that the attack should be made on the open road, rather than at St. Ménéhould or Clermont, where the National Guards were strongly interested in the popular cause, and disposed

against the military, he determined to lend his best efforts to the undertaking.

"If I am mistaken in my interpretation of General La Fayette's wishes," thought he, "and even should the attempt prove as abortive as every other measure connected with the fortunes of the King and Queen, I must push my way to Metz, and over the frontier to Coblentz.—At the worst—I can die!—Heaven knows I have little to render either exile or the grave repugnant to my feelings. Perhaps she will scorn me less when she knows I have perished in the cause she loves!"

The sun rose upon his path, as Valazy pursued his way through the forest road. Dashing the dew from the hazel-bushes as he galloped wildly along, and disturbing from their morning song the multitude of birds who had built their unmolested nests in these lonely woods,—he could perceive where the detachment of dragoons had forced its progress, by the entangled aud fading wreaths of woodbine which had been rent away, and by the wild roses trampled under foot. Still, notwithstanding these

traces of recent passage, there was a profound depth of verdure—a tranquil and fragrant loneliness about the place—which, at any other moment, would have induced him to loiter on his errand, and contrast the almost sacred stillness and purity of the scene, with the fierce, tumultuous, and wearisome strife of the gorgeous dwellings and agitated city, he had left behind. But now he was urged on by an imperious duty—even by the hope of suspending an effusion of human blood!

Fortunately for Valazy, the horse with which he had been furnished at Pont de Somme Vesle was one of the best of those reserved for the service of the couriers; and he had every expectation of reaching Dun by ten or eleven o'clock. But on emerging from a stately grove of arbeal trees, terminating the woodlands of Clermont, with his eyes dazzled by the transition from their shadowy verdure to the scorching sunshine of the open fields, he perceived at some distance before him a group of four or five dragoons riding from the high road towards a creditable-looking farm-house;—pausing occasionally to reconnoitre, as if they were

dodging some fugitive through the meadows. On approaching more closely upon their track, Camille, who had the advantage of a rising ground to assist his observations, perceived at the distance of nearly a quarter of a mile, the person of whom they were evidently in pursuit; —a horseman mounted on a tired and wretched beast, who was skulking behind some hedgerows, in a heathy covert of furze and broom, adjoining the garden of the farm.

Camille instantly conceiving that the person thus pursued must be one of the couriers despatched from Varennes to Stenay, dashed forward to elucidate the mystery; but in his course, to his great vexation, he suddenly found himself on the brink of a gravelly hollow,—the channel of a deep and rapid current; and being delayed by the difficulty of getting his horse across this awkward pass, he lost sight of all parties on regaining the level of the meadows. The sound of shouts in the distance served, however, to pilot him onwards; and on passing a screen of maple bushes, he suddenly checked his horse, and as quickly spurred him to full speed again, on perceiving that in the very next

meadow, the fugitive was engaged in defending himself against a fierce attack on the part of four soldiers, whom he conceived to be marauding stragglers belonging to Lauzun's hussars; —for the person encountering these fearful odds, was no other than the Marquis de St. Florentin!—

Already he had managed to disable two of his antagonists, one of whom had fallen senseless, or perhaps dead, to the ground. But it appeared to Valazy that the Marquis himself sat feebly in his saddle, as if exhausted by his exertions.—To dash forward sword in hand to his relief was but the thought and work of a moment! But ere he could reach the spot and interpose his assistance with any effect, the disabled dragoon who had been wounded by St. Florentin with a desperate cut in the bridle-arm, drew out a pistol; the flash of which traversed the eyes of Camille just as he dealt a tremendous blow to the soldier with whom St. Florentin had been engaged. Turning fiercely on the man by whom it was discharged, he was about to prevent him from drawing a second

from his holster, when the dragoon struck down his sabre with the butt of the pistol he still held in his hand; and instantly repeated the stroke on the schakos of Valazy, who reeled dizzily upon his horse, and fell stunned and senseless to the earth!

Rapid as was the progress of these movements, St. Florentin with a hasty glance had recognized the brave defender thus strangely and opportunely sent to his aid. But although he had as quickly the mortification of seeing him fall,—and as he believed, mortally wounded,—the Marquis found in the pause occasioned by his startling intervention, all the advantage he so much required, and had a moment before believed unattainable. While he prepared to close with the only dragoon still capable of very active defence,—for the last of the four fled the field on Valazy's approach,—he had the satisfaction to see a young peasant of the country gallop on a cart-horse to the spot, and lay about him such lusty blows with a huge blackthorn cudgel which he poised in his hand as lightly as a riding-whip, that the two remaining sol-

diers took hastily to flight; leaving their dying comrade in evidence of the pusillanimous part they had taken in the affray.

But alas!—this powerful reinforcement arrived too late!—A pistol-ball had penetrated the shoulder of the Marquis de St. Florentin; and young Antoine Marmin, the farming lad who had so materially and successfully seconded his efforts, and who had now dismounted from his panting beast of burthen, found some difficulty in sustaining him upon his saddle; while he persuaded him to accept the shelter of the farm-house whose peaked gables were visible through the screen of maple-trees, and which he pointed out as belonging to his father.

"You will be safe at Boisgelin, noble Sir!" said the young man, on perceiving the decoration worn by St. Florentin, "in case yonder thieves should return with a reinforcement. It it said that half the garrison of Stenay have declared in favour of the nation, to the very teeth of the Marquis de Bouillé: and I take it that the fellows with whom I found you beset, belong to these mutineers."

"Do you know the Marquis, my good lad,"

said St. Florentin, as they entered the little court of the farm.

"None better, Sir; he has often stopped at Boisgelin on his cross-road from Châlons, to take a cup of whey from my mother who has a famous name for it in the country.—Holà! Jean-Marie!—Jacob!—Baptiste!—Bénoit!—help here—fly!" and while a tribe of rough looking fellows with blue smock-frocks and cotton-nightcaps rushed from the outhouses to perform the office of grooms to the stranger and their young master, Antoine carefully lifted him from his horse, and with some assistance conveyed him into the house.

"Mother! I have brought you a wounded gentleman, half murdered by a cowardly band of the Stenay hussars."

"*Eh! Jésus Maria! not' bon Sauveur!*—what has happened!—My Toinon, you are covered with blood!"

"It is not mine, mother—it is none of mine. But do not stand parleying; tell me where shall I convey this gentleman?—He grows faint, and I can scarcely support him."

"Here—this way!" cried Lison Marmin,

recovering all her prompt address and presence of mind, now she perceived her favourite son to be unharmed; and she eagerly assisted to lay St. Florentin on her own state-bed, and to bathe his temples and hands with vinegar, while he lay in his deathlike swoon.

As soon, however, as he recovered to some consciousness of what was going on around him, and of the direful events which had recently occurred, he persisted in his inquiries of Antoine Marmin. "You know the commander-in-chief,—you know Stenay; you seem a loyal and well-intentioned lad?"

"I am, Sir,—I do, Sir!—but the Marquis de Bouillé is not now at Stenay; he slept at Dun last night."

"To Dun, then—to Dun! my worthy fellow, with this paper, if you would win the weight of your head in gold," exclaimed the Marquis, searching in the bosom of his vest for a billet. "It is gone—I must have lost it in the struggle!" he faltered in a failing voice. "But never mind! time presses—see the Marquis de Bouillé—tell him the King is arrested

at Varennes; bid him fly to the rescue!—Say that his friend St. Florentin was murdered by a cowardly gang belonging to his brigade, as he traversed the bye-ways of the country to bear him a few words hastily traced by his Majesty at the moment of his arrest, imploring his instant assistance. Tell him," continued the Marquis, with perplexed and languid utterance, "that our cause is lost, unless through his exertions!"

"I would do your bidding, Sir," interrupted the young fellow, with a look of much concern, "both for the good King's sake—God help him!—and for your own; but we have not horse or colt left in the stable of Boisgelin. My father is gone on brown Jocrisse to the market at Stenay;—and I have sent off Baptiste on the brood mare to fetch the surgeon of Briqueshen."

"Great God! how unlucky!" faltered St. Florentin; "all then is over!—Alas! for Louis and for my country!"

Lison now implored her unfortunate guest to compose himself, while she attempted to staunch

the blood which welled in frightful quantities from his wound, increasing the painful dizziness of his frame.

" It matters not," said he, with a mournful smile. " The surgeon whom you have so unluckily sought on my account, will tell you, if he is worth his errand, that I shall not see the rising of another sun !"

And Lison, with tears streaming down her face, recollected this melancholy foreboding when she composed the limbs of the unfortunate Marquis de St. Florentin for the grave, before the dawn of the following day !

END OF VOLUME I.

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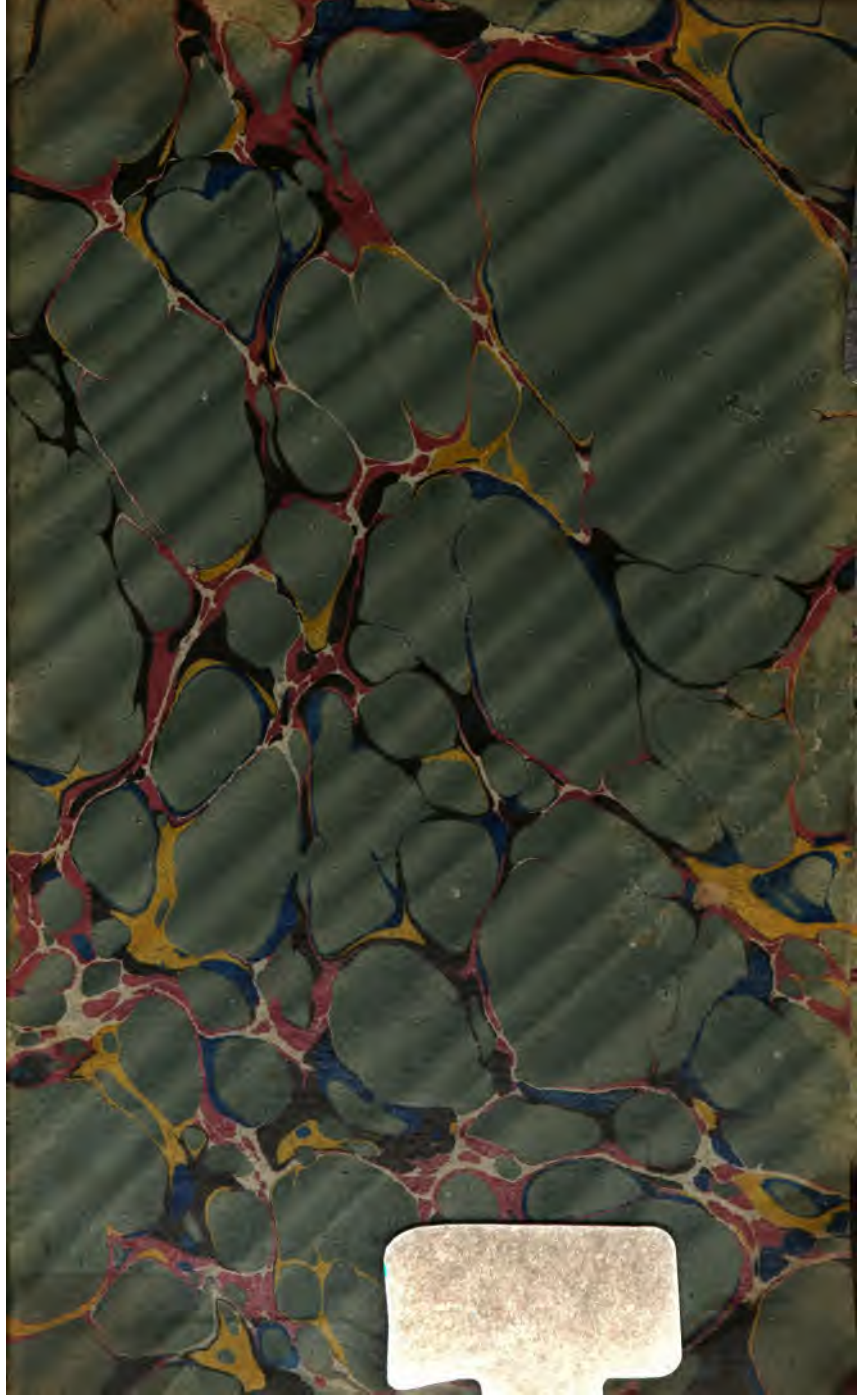
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